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The Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology
Edited by Lewis Ayres and Medi Ann Volpe

Print Publication Date: Mar 2019 Subject: Religion Online Publication Date: May 2015

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Dedication

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(p. v) Dedication

in piam memoriam

Fr William Harmless SJ

1953–2014

Fr Edward Oakes SJ

1948–2013 (p. vi)

Preface and Acknowledgements

The Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology
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(p. vii) Preface and Acknowledgements

THE purpose of this Handbook is to provide a readable and dependable guide to the content of Catholic theology, and to introduce the different schools and debates of modern Catholic theology against the broader background of Catholic tradition. Two main parts provide a basic structure.

The first focuses on Catholic doctrine. One potential contributor remarked that the volume seemed unnecessary because of the existence of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. But the volume seeks no competition with the *Catechism*, and there are good reasons why such a supplement may help. The *Catechism* offers, of course, a concise and authoritative statement of Catholic belief. While the discussions in the first half of this volume certainly attempt to be concise and to describe as Catholic teaching accurately, our authors also attempt to offer personal visions of the particular themes they consider. The authors write from particular theological perspectives to articulate the coherence and power of particular aspects of Catholic teaching. Thus, while each chapter is the responsibility of its author, and the whole carries no ecclesial authority, our ideal contribution is one that combines faithful exposition and exploration. Exploration here is a thinking with Church teaching, a meditating upon that teaching, drawing it into conversation with particular intellectual resources and particular questions. It involves bringing themes alive by showing their power to address the questions of our time, and shows how the approaches of particular theological schools can deepen and make new traditional teachings. It means also drawing our attention to what is at the heart of teaching in a particular area of theology and noting where questions remain matters of personal opinion and debate. Exploration involves careful attention to Scripture, to the resources of the Christian tradition—both to the particular tradition of defined magisterial teaching and to the ‘cloud of witnesses’ that constitute the conversation of tradition—and exploration at its best stems from the rootedness of a theologian in particular schools and debates. Thus, the reader should, through these chapters, find something of a model for good theological debate.

The second main part of the volume focuses on movements, key figures, and developments in modern Catholic theology, which is taken here to commence in the decade that saw the First Vatican Council of 1869–70 and Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris* of 1879 (this decision is, of course, contestable in many ways). It, is however, an intellectual and (p. viii) theological mistake not to place these developments within the wider stream of Catholic theology. Catholic thought cannot be easily sliced into distinct eras as if the voices of an earlier era could not now remain living voices. Catholic thought is marked by a repeated turn to the sources of the faith and a repeated insistence that St Thomas Aquinas remains a key resource and model for the Latin tradition. And so, this second part of the volume begins with a series of chapters on the sources of Catholic theology up to 1870. Hard choices had to be made for the sake of space and a different selection of figures and movements would, of course, have been quite defensible.

Observing the structure of the second half of the volume provides an excellent opportunity to note also the significance of St Thomas Aquinas throughout. Thomas's importance within Latin theology has waxed and waned since his death in 1275. His star burned particularly bright in the nineteenth century and led Pope Leo XIII, in his 1869 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, to demand Thomas's teaching for the indispensable foundation for Catholic philosophy and theology. Since the Second Vatican Council that status has become a little less clear. Thomas is certainly still recommended to us as a particularly significant model of theological reflection, but theologians now write in a context where a multitude of (faithful) styles are possible. And yet, the past two decades have seen Thomas's fortunes wax yet again, and for a number of the contributors to this volume, Thomas continues to provide the indispensable foundation for Latin Catholic theology. The complex story of Thomas's place in Catholic thought is told through a number of essays: Chapter 31 concerns Thomas himself and the reception of Thomas until 1879. Chapters 38 and 39 continue that story by focusing on different stages in the reception of Thomas up to the present. Chapter 41 concerns those known as 'transcendental Thomists'.

It is important to note one significant limitation of this volume. The Catholic communion is broad and not restricted to members of the Latin rite. Millions of Catholic Christians belong to the various non-Latin rites of the Church. The theological tradition that is our focus here is, however, that of the Latin rite. Now, the differences should not be overplayed. All Catholic Christians owe a common debt to the same Scriptural and Patristic sources, all are part of the same one body in communion with Peter's successor, and all share common creeds and a common tradition of conciliar and papal teaching. And yet there are differences of emphasis. Catholic theologians do well to remember the various significant interventions at Vatican II by the Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV Sayegh 'of Antioch and All the East …', reminding the council fathers that Catholic theology is not coterminous with Latin theology. Given this restriction, we hope that the volume will be useful to a wide variety of students of Catholic theology, from undergraduates and postgraduates in colleges and universities, to seminarians, to those training for the permanent diaconate.

Preface and Acknowledgements

This Handbook has been a decade in production. We conceived the idea while teaching at Emory and its long gestation period occurred in Durham. A transatlantic move with three children and the birth of a fourth have certainly added to the delay, as have all the usual pressures of academic life. A number of the original contributors had to drop out for the usual range of reasons—and in this case one was ordained (p. ix) to the episcopate and one appointed to the College of Cardinals. Two of the original contributors—Fr Edward Oakes and Fr William Harmless SJ— fine theologians (and friends) both, died before it appeared. Bill Harmless's chapter is included, but Ed Oakes was unable to complete his. The volume is dedicated to their memory. For bearing with us during this time, we are profoundly grateful to our contributors and advisors. Oxford University Press has been a pleasure to work with throughout, and ever patient.

A number of contributors served as an informal editorial board providing suggestions for contributors and subjects to include: these were Fr Serge-Thomas Bonino OP, Abp. Augustine DiNoia OP, Professor Francesca Murphy, and Fr Thomas Weinandy OFM Cap. The editors thank these four for their help and ask that readers do not hold them responsible for our final decisions and for the final chapters that resulted.

14 October 2018

On the canonization of St Oscar Romero and St Paul VI (p. x)

Notes on Sources and Abbreviations

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(p. xvii) Notes on Sources and Abbreviations

CCC	*Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The *Catechism* is published throughout the world by many local publishers and the whole text is also available on-line at <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM>
DH	Heinrich Denzinger (2012). *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fide et Morum*, P. Hünermann et al. (eds), 43rd edn (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press).
GIRM	*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. The text is available online at <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20030317_ordinamento-messale_en.html>. A pdf of the English translation is available online at <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/GIRM/Documents/GIRM.pdf
Tanner	Norman Tanner SJ (ed.) (1990). *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols (London/Washington, DC: Sheed & Ward/Georgetown University Press).

Works of St Thomas Aquinas

There are a number of excellent online resources for the student of Thomas Aquinas. For texts in English and for the Latin originals see the following websites:

<https://dhspriory.org/thomas/> (a site that provides links to many translations and Latin texts, sometimes older translations than those recommended here).
<https://aquinas-in-english.neocities.org/#titleabbrev> (a site that provides an up-to-date list of translations of the works of Thomas Aquinas in English).
<http://www.corpusthomisticum.org> (a site that provides details on the various Latin editions).

Notes on Sources and Abbreviations

The following list provides details of abbreviations for titles (where used), and details of the translations used in this volume.

Comp.	Thomas Aquinas (2009). *Compendium of Theology*, trans. Richard J. Regan (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
De anima	St Thomas Aquinas OP (1984), *Questions on the Soul [Quaestiones de Anima]*, trans James H. Robb (Milwaukee WI: Marquette University Press).
(p. xviii) *De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis*	'On the Articles of Faith and the Church's Sacraments', in J. B. Collins (trans.) (1939). *The Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas* pp. 119–131 (New York: Wagner).
De divin. nom.	Harry C. Marsh (1994). 'A Translation of Thomas Aquinas's *In Librum beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus expositio*', in H. C. Marsh, 'Cosmic Structure and the Knowledge of God: Thomas Aquinas' *In Librum beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus expositio*' (pp. 265–549). PhD diss., Vanderbilt University.
De ente et essentia	St Thomas Aquinas (1968). *On Being and Essence*, trans. A. Maurer, 2nd edn (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies).
De pot.	Thomas Aquinas (2012). *The Power of God*, trans. R. J. Regan (Oxford: Oxford University Press). This translation is also abridged. A full version available at <https://dhspriory.org/thomas/english/QDdePotentia.htm>
De Regno	Thomas Aquinas (1949). *De Regno ad regem Cypri/On Kingship to the King of Cyprus,* trans. G. B. Phelan, rev. I. Th. Eschman (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies).
De verit.	Thomas Aquinas (1952). *Truth*, trans R. W. Mulligan, J. V. McGlynn, and R. W. Schmidt, 3 vols (Chicago, IL: Henry Regency).
In Ioan.	Thomas Aquinas (2010). *Commentary on the Gospel of John,* trans. J. A. Weisheipl and F. R. Larcher, 3 vols (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press).

Metaphys.	Thomas Aquinas (1995). *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, rev. edn., trans. J. P. Rowan (South Bend, IN: Dumb Ox Press).
ST	*Summa Theologiae.* In this volume the *Summa* is cited, for example, as follows: *ST* I, q. 1, a.1, where I designates the first part of *ST,* q. stands for 'question' and a. 'article'. The best complete text with facing translation available in English is that produced under the auspices of the English-speaking provinces of the Dominican Order and published beginning in 1964. It is now available from Cambridge University Press. Not yet complete, but an important supplement is the translation by A. Freddoso, available online at <https://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/summa-translation/TOC.htm> (last accessed 9 May 2018).
SCG	*Summa Contra Gentiles.* A good translation is that published in five volumes in 1975 by the University of Notre Dame Press (*Book One: God,* trans. A. C. Pegis, *Book Two: Creation,* trans. J. F. Anderson, *Book Three: Providence, Part I*, trans. V. J. Bourke, *Book Three: Providence, Part II,* trans. C. J. O'Neil, *Book Four: Salvation,* trans. C. J. O'Neil).
Sent	*Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard.* Not currently available in a complete translation. For details of what is available see <https://aquinas-in-english.neocities.org>.
(p. xix) *Super Ep. ad Philpp.*	Thomas Aquinas (2012). *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul: Complete Set,* vol. 4, J. Mortensen (ed.) (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute).

Conciliar Documents

All the conciliar documents referenced in the book can be found in Tanner (1990). The texts from the three most recent ecumenical councils used in a number of places throughout the Handbook are referred to as follows:

Council of Trent (1545–63)

The standard translation is that to be found in Tanner. A much older translation is available online only at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/councils/trent.htm>. Only those documents that are referenced in this volume are listed here in the order in which they were issued:

On Scripture and Tradition	1546 (session 4). A decree setting out which books are canonical. Tanner 1990: 663–664
On the Acceptance of the Vulgate	1546 (session 4). A decree on the use of the Vulgate. Tanner 1990: 664–665.
On Original Sin	1546 (session 5). A decree setting out teaching on original sin. Tanner 1990: 665–667.
On Justification	1547 (session 6). A decree setting out Catholic teaching in response to the emergence of Protestant teachings on the theme. Tanner 1990: 671–681.
On the Sacraments	1547 (session 7). A decree emphasizing the dominical institution of the sacraments and emphasizing their centrality to the Christian life. Tanner 1990: 684–686.
On the Eucharist	1551 (session 13). A decree setting out Catholic teaching on the Eucharist. Tanner 1990: 693–698.
On Penance	1551 (session 14). A decree setting out the necessity of the sacrament of penance and setting out its appropriate practice. Tanner 1990: 703–709.
On Extreme Unction	1551 (session 14). A decree closely following that on penance, emphasizing extreme unction as the final event in the sacramental life. Tanner 1990: 710–713.
On Reform	1551 (session 14). A decree attempting to reform the Church, focusing on the roles of bishops and priests. Tanner 1990: 714–718.
On the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass	1562 (session 22). A decree focusing on the manner in which the Eucharist is to be understood as a sacrifice. Tanner 1990: 732–736.
(p. xx) *On Reform*	1562 (session 22). A decree advancing further reform, focusing on the ethical obligations of clergy, regulations for the ordering of cathedrals, and the legal and administrative duties of clergy. Tanner 1990: 737–741.

On the Sacrament of Order	1563 (session 23). A decree emphasizing the divine institution of a threefold structure to Holy Orders. Tanner 1990: 743–744.
On the Sacrament of Marriage	1563 (session 24). A brief account of marriage followed by a series of canons on marriage, and a separate series attempting to reform marriage practice, focusing on 'secret' and forced marriages. Tanner 1990: 753–759.
On Reform	1563 (session 24). A further decree suggesting patterns of reform encouraging appropriate structure of provincial and diocesan governance, including the importance of bishops preaching, visiting, as well as further regulation of cathedral life and practice. Tanner 1990: 759–773.
On Purgatory	1563 (session 25). A short decree insisting on the existence of purgatory. Tanner 1990: 774.
On General Reform	1563 (session 25). A further decree on the reform of the Church, covering many topics, but including much on the role of bishops and the privileges and duties of lay patrons. Tanner 1990: 784–796.

Vatican I (1869–70)

Dei Filius	24 April 1870. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*. This text concerns God as creator, the nature of revelation, and the relationship between faith and reason. Tanner 1990: 804–811.
Pastor aeternus	18 July 1870. *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ.* This text defines the role of the successors of Peter in the Church, concluding with a statement concerning the character of their infallible teaching authority. Tanner 1990: 811–816.

Vatican II (1962–5)

The standard translation for the documents of the Council remains Austin Flannery (ed.) (1996). *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press). The documents may also be found online at <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm>

Latin title	English title	Date promulgated
Sacrosanctum concilium (*SC*)	The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy	4 December 1963
Lumen gentium (*LG*)	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church	21 November 1964
Dei verbum (*DV*)	Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation	18 November 1965
Gaudium et spes (*GS*)	Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World	7 December 1965
Gravissimum educationis (*GE*)	Declaration on Christian Education	28 October 1965
Nostra aetate (*NA*)	Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions	28 October 1965
Dignitatis humanae (*DH*)	Declaration on Religious Liberty	7 December 1965
Inter mirifica (*IM*)	Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication	4 December 1963
Orientalium Ecclesiarum (*OE*)	Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches	21 November 1964
Unitatis redintegratio (*UR*)	Decree on Ecumenism	21 November 1964
Christus Dominus (*CD*)	Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church	28 October 1965
Perfectae caritatis (*PC*)	Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life	28 October 1965
Optatam totius (*OT*)	Decree on the Training of Priests	28 October 1965

Apostolicam actuositatem (*AA*)	Decree on the Apostolate of Laypeople	18 November 1965
Ad gentes divinitus (*AG*)	Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity	7 December 1965
Presbyterium ordinis (*PO*)	Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests	7 December 1965

(p. xxii) Papal Documents

These documents are listed in date order under the name of the issuing pontiff (only those documents cited in the volume are noted).

Eugene IV (1431–47)

Exultate Deo	22 November 1439. A bull setting out the terms of union with the Armenians. The text contains an extended discussion of the sacraments, much of which is drawn from St Thomas Aquinas. Issued in conjunction with the work of the Council of Florence. Online at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/eugenius-iv/la/documents/bulla-exultate-deo-22-nov-1439.html>. An English translation available at <https://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/FLORENCE.HTM>

Leo X (1513–21)

Exsurge Domine	15 June 1520. This papal bull censured forty-one propositions taken from Luther's writings and threatened him with excommunication unless he recanted. Available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo10/l10exdom.htm>

Paul III (1534–49)

Laetare Jerusalem	1 November 1542. A bull calling what would become the Council of Trent.

Pius IV (1559–64)

Benedictus Deus	26 January 1564. This bull sanctioned all the decrees of the Council of Trent. Available at <https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Canons_and_Decrees_of_the_Council_of_Trent/Second_Part/Bull_of_our_most_Holy_Lord_Pius_Fourth>

Pius V (1566–72)

Mirabilis Deus	11 April 1567. This Apostolic Constitution proclaimed St Thomas Aquinas a ‘Doctor of the Church’.

Gregory XVI (1831–46)

Mirari vos	15 August 1832. This encyclical condemns early nineteenth-century claims that recognition of freedom of conscience and other liberal reforms of society could be approved by Catholics. Available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Greg16/g16mirar.htm>

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Bl. Pius IX (1846–78)

Qui pluribus	9 November 1846. This encyclical emphasizes the mutual relationship of faith and reason, and opposes religious pluralism. Available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9quiplu.htm>
Ineffabilis Deus	8 December 1854. An apostolic constitution defining the immaculate conception of Mary. Available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9ineff.htm>
Quanta cura	8 December 1864. This encyclical condemns the idea that individual freedom of conscience is a right, and it asserts the power of the Church against nineteenth-century attempts to exalt the power of the state. As an annex to the text the ‘Syllabus of Errors’ was issued, which condemned eighty propositions. Available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9quanta.htm> (the encyclical) and <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius09/p9syll.htm> (the syllabus).

Leo XIII (1878–1903)

Quod apostolici muneris	28 December 1878. This encyclical opposes socialism, communism, and nihilism. The socialism that it opposes is one that seeks to take into common ownership that which has been legitimately owned by private individuals. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_28121878_quod-apostolici-muneris.html>
Diuturnum Illud	29 June 1881. This encyclical emphasizes that all worldy power derives from God. The Church does not prefer any particular political order, provided that divine authority is respected. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_29061881_diuturnum.html>
Immortale Dei	1 November 1885. This encyclical deplores political arrangements that do not respect the authority of the Church in all that pertains to the supernatural sphere. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_01111885_immortale-dei.html>
Libertas praestantissimum	20 June 1888. This encyclical on the nature of human liberty places the concept in a traditional Augustinian and Thomist framework: there is a natural law that frames true freedom, and because the Church has been given a share in divine authority true liberty is shaped by adherence to it. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20061888_libertas.html>
Sapientiae Christianae	10 January 1890. This encyclical on Christians and citizens emphasizes that states are not ends in themselves, but aids to enable human beings to find their true end. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10011890_sapientiae-christianae.html>
(p. xxiv) *Rerum novarum*	15 May 1891. This famous encyclical is often taken to mark the beginning of modern Catholic social teaching. It discusses the rights and duties of labour and capital, arguing for the legitimacy of workers organizing in unions, even as the right to private property is emphasized. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html>

Providentissimus Deus	18 November 1893. This encyclical defends divine authorship of the Scriptures, permits some use of historical-critical methods to defend a Catholic understanding of Scripture, and sketches how biblical interpretation should be taught. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_18111893_providentissimus-deus.html>
Praeclara gratulationis publicae	20 June 1894. This Apostolic Letter called for the reunion of the Church in East and West: the Eastern Churches are called to resubmit to papal authority. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/la/apost_letters/documents/hf_l-xiii_apl_18940620_praeclara-gratulationis.html>. An English translation is available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/leo13/l13praec.htm>
Orientalium dignitas	30 November 1894. This encyclical concerns Eastern rite Catholic Churches, calling on them to remain true to their own traditions. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/la/apost_letters/documents/hf_l-xiii_apl_18941130_orientalium-dignitas.html>. An English translation is available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/leo13/l13orient.htm>
Fidentem piumque animum	20 September 1896. This encyclical encourages the praying of the rosary. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20091896_fidentem-piumque-animum.html>
Divinum illud munus	9 May 1897. This encyclical offers an extensive meditation on the Holy Spirit. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_09051897_divinum-illud-munus.html>

St Pius X (1903–14)

Tra le Sollecitudini	22 November 1903. A *motu proprio* calling for a renewal of liturgical music and especially for the use of Gregorian chant. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-x_motu-proprio_19031122_sollecitudini.html>. An English translation is available at <https://adoremus.org/1903/11/22/tra-le-sollecitudini/>
Sacra Tridentina	20 December 1905. A *motu proprio* emphasizing the value of daily communion by laypeople. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-x_motu-

	proprio_19050716_sacrosancta-tridentina-synodus.html> An English translation is available at <https://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDWFREQ.HTM>
Ea semper	14 June 1907. An apostolic letter regarding the governance of Ruthenian and Greek Catholics in the US. It was perceived as overly subordinating the Greek rite to (p. xxv) the Latin. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/la/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-x_apl_19070614_ea-semper-fuit.html>
Pascendi dominici gregis	8 September 1907. The encyclical condemns 'Modernism'. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis.html>
Sacrorum antitistum	1 September 1910. A *motu proprio* introducing an 'anti-Modernist oath' for all bishops, priests, and teachers in Catholic faculties, eventually abolished by Paul VI. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-x_motu-proprio_19100901_sacrorum-antistitum.html>. An English translation of the concluding oath available at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius10/p10moath.htm>
Postquam sanctissimus	27 July 1914. The decree identifies twenty-four theses as key principles of Thomism. The text of the decree is not on the Vatican website. The theses themselves are available at <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~aversa/scholastic/24Thomisticpart2.htm>
Doctoris angelis	29 June 1914. A *motu proprio* declaring the necessity of Thomist philosophy as a foundation for theological thought. An English translation available at <https://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/doctoris.htm>

Benedict XV (1914–22)

Maximum illud	30 November 1919. This apostolic letter concerns Catholic missions. Available at <https://www.svdcuria.org/public/mission/docs/encycl/mi-en.htm>

Pius XI (1922–39)

Studiorem ducem	29 June 1923. An encyclical extolling the virtues of St Thomas Aquinas as a thinker and his works as an object of study. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/la/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19230629_studiorum-ducem.html>. An English translation is available at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/encyc/p11studi.htm>
Rerum ecclesiae	28 February 1926. This encyclical concerned Catholic missionary work. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_28021926_rerum-ecclesiae.html>
Mortalium animos	6 January 1928. An encyclical condemning some features of the early ecumenical movement, especially the idea that the one Church is not yet visible. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19280106_mortalium-animos.html>
Quadragesimo anno	15 May 1931. On the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* this encyclical extolls the virtues of solidarity and subsidiarity in the social and political (p. xxvi) order. Government, industry, and labour are encouraged to work together, in an alternative to communism and unbridled capitalism. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html>
Divini redemptoris	13 March 1937. This encyclical exposes the errors of communism. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19370319_divini-redemptoris.html>

Pius XII (1939–58)

Mystici corporis	29 June 1943. An encyclical on the Church as the Body of Christ, issued during the Second World War, stimulated in part by knowledge of the Nazi programmes for murdering Jews and the disabled. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html>
Divino afflante Spiritu	30 September 1943. An encyclical on the fiftieth anniversary of *Providentissimu Deus* calling for new translations of the Scriptures from the original language and endorsing certain modes of historical-critical scholarship. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu.html>

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Mediator Dei	20 November 1947. An encyclical devoted to the liturgy. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei.html>
Humani generis	12 August 1950. An encyclical condemning false opinions on a number of subjects. The encyclical is generally taken to support neo-Thomists against the work of those associated with the *Ressourcement* movement. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_12081950_humani-generis.html>
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Evangelii praecones	2 June 1951. An encyclical on Catholic mission work. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_02061951_evangelii-praecones.html>
(p. xxvii) *Doctor mellifluus*	24 May 1953. An encyclical extolling the virtues of Bernard of Clairvaux. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_24051953_doctor-mellifluus.html>

St John XXIII (1958–63)

Mater et Magistra	15 May 1961. On the seventieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* this encyclical emphasizes the common good, the dignity of agricultural work, and the importance of wealthier nations aiding poorer. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater.html>

Pacem in terris	11 April 1963. This encyclical discusses the relationship between human beings, human beings and the state, and the need for peace among states. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html>

St Paul VI (1963–78)

Ecclesiam suam	6 August 1964. An encyclical on the nature of the Church. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam.html>
Mysterium fidei	3 September 1965. An encyclical directed at reinforcing traditional eucharistic piety. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_03091965_mysterium.html>
Sacrum diaconatus ordinem	18 June 1967. A *motu proprio* restoring the permanent diaconate. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19670618_sacrum-diaconatus.html>
Pontificalis romani	18 June 1968. An Apostolic Constitution approving new rites for the ordination of bishops, priests, and deacons. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-vi_apc_19680618_pontificalis-romani.html>
Humanae vitae	25 July 1968. An encyclical setting out the Church's traditional teaching on the regulation of conception and rejecting most forms of artificial contraception. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html>
Ministeria quaedam	15 August 1972. A *motu proprio* suppressing some 'minor' orders, and the 'major' order of subdeacon, and opening the orders of acolyte and lector to laypeople. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19720815_ministeria-quaedam.html>. An English translation is available at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/p6minors.htm>
(p. xxviii) *Ad Pascendum*	15 August 1972. An Apostolic Letter setting norms for the ordination of permanent deacons. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19720815_ad-pascendum.html>. An English translation available at <http://dia-

	conate-form.blogspot.com/2012/05/ad-pascendum-english-translation.html>
Lumen ecclesiae	20 November 1974. A letter marking the seven hundredth anniversary of the death of St Thomas Aquinas. Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/letters/1974/documents/hf_p-vi_let_19741120_lumen-ecclesiae.html>
Evangelii nuntiandi	8 December 1975. An Apostolic Exhortation on evangelization in the modern world, following a synod on the subject held in 1974. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html>

St John Paul II (1978–2005)

Laborem exercens	14 September 1981. On the ninetieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* this encyclical focuses on the dignity of work and workers. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html>
Familiaris consortio	22 November 1981. This is an Apostolic Exhortation on the Christian family in the modern world, following the Extraordinary Synod on the Family in 1980. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio.html>
Salvifici doloris	11 February 1984. An apostolic letter on the mystery of human suffering. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1984/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_11021984_salvifici-doloris.html>
Redemptoris mater	25 March 1987. An encyclical discussing Mary's role in the plan of salvation, and then specifically in the life of the Church. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031987_redemptoris-mater.html>
Sollicitudo rei socialis	30 December 1987. An encyclical on the twentieth anniversary of *Populorum progression* concerning the social teaching of the Church. True development consists not in the multiplication of goods, but the creation of conditions in which human persons can flourish. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html>

Redemptoris missio	7 December 1990. This encyclical speaks of the urgency of the Church's missionary task on the twenty-fifth anniversary of *AG.* Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html>
Centesimus annus	1 May 991. Issued on the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* this encyclical examines contemporary social and political issues, including the errors (p. xxix) of communism and other dictatorial regimes. Social and political systems that enable and respect human dignity are commended. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus.html>
Gratissimum sane	2 February 1994. A letter to families on the occasion of the Year of the Family. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families.html>
Evangelium vitae	25 March 1995. An encyclical treating the value of human life and actions that do not respect this, including abortion, the death penalty, murder, and euthanasia. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html>
Orientale lumen	2 May 1995. An apostolic letter emphasizing the value of the Eastern Christian traditions, issued on the centenary of *Orientalium dignitas.* Available at <https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19950502_orientale-lumen.html>
Ut unum sint	25 May 1995. This encyclical considers how the Catholic Church should embrace the ecumenical movement and some fundamental questions that must be studied if progress is to be made. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html>
Apostolos suos	28 May 1998. A *motu proprio* on the theological foundations of and regulatory norms for episcopal conferences. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_jp-ii_motu-proprio_22071998_apostolos-suos.html>
Fides et ratio	14 September 1998. An encyclical dealing with the relationship between faith and reason, and appropriate understandings of philosophical thinking. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html>

Ecclesia in Asia	6 November 1999. An apostolic exhortation following the special Asian synod held in Rome in 1998. The document explores the task of proclaiming the Catholic faith in modern Asia. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_06111999_ecclesia-in-asia.html>

Benedict XVI (2005–13)

Deus caritas est	25 December 2005. This encyclical celebrates love as a theological virtue. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html>
Spe salvi	30 November 2007. This encyclical concerns the theological virtue of hope. It teaches that Christ brings a hope that may shape human lives towards encounters (p. xxx) with God. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html>
Caritas in veritate	29 June 2009. An encyclical asserting that economic actions must be rooted in Christian ethical principles. The encyclical also discusses many isues concerning current global development and economic inequality. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html>
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Notes on Sources and Abbreviations

Francis (2013–)

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Laudato si'	24 May 2015. This encyclical critiques consumerism, identifies environmental crises, and calls for Christians to take action. Available at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html>
Amoris Laetitia	26th March 2016. This post-synodal apostolic exhortation concerns the nature of families, and the pastoral care of families. Available at https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf

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What is Catholic Theology?

Lewis Ayres

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter argues that theological thinking should be considered as intrinsic to the activity of proclamation and as a form of speculation called forth as part of God's salvific economy. God's Word not only became flesh and revealed the Father, but Christ and his Spirit also act in his body, the Church, to reform and elevate human reason, to shape our understanding and celebration of revelation. This is so, even as theological thinking is also a human activity that may go astray. Theological thinking contains at its heart a dynamic relationship between attentive interpretation to Scripture and attention to the radical newness brought about by the continuing activity of Christ and the Spirit in the world. At the same time, in attention to the Church's tradition, the theologian finds a school for the speculative imagination. The final section focuses on the unity and diversity of different theological acts and subdisciplines.

Keywords: theology, Scripture, revelation, interpretation, tradition, speculation, Vatican II, faith, doctrine, dogma

Defining Theology

MANY textbook accounts define theology by means of etymology—the term comes from two Greek words and means something like 'speaking rationally about God'. This is of limited usefulness for a number of reasons. Historically, the actual kinds of reasoning about God that have been constitutive of theology were defined by long traditions of usage and development. Consequently, to get to grips with the character of theological reasoning we need to explore these kinds of reasoning and their contexts. It is also important to note that the English word 'theology' is now used in places where a range of other terms and phrases would have been used in previous centuries; we need to see a little of that range. And, lastly, different Christian traditions have somewhat different conceptions of theology which have, in part, been formed through mutual opposition (even if those in opposition are members of the same family!). Thus, even though theologians from different traditions today find themselves more in conversation than possibly at any point since the first thousand years of Christianity, if we are to understand what the term 'theology' means

within *Catholic* tradition, a fairly extensive definition will be most helpful. Through the rest of the chapter I will explore the various discussions that lie behind its paragraphs.

> Theological thinking is one way in which Christians proclaim, speculate, wonder, and praise. Christians think theologically about the meaning of God's action in Christ, the nature of the God who has acted, the character of appropriate human intellectual and moral life in the light of this divine action, how the created order should be envisaged in the light of its relationship to its Creator and Saviour. As they seek to understand, Christians are led to share this knowledge with others, and their minds and hearts are moved towards wonder and praise. (p. 6)
>
> All theological thinking is founded on listening to, and attending upon God's Word, Jesus Christ. The central focus of this attention is Scripture, through which God continues to speak his Word: 'the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology' (*DV* 24). Theological thinking interprets Scripture in the light of Christ and the Spirit working in the Christian community to lead us into all truth. It is thus a creative activity dependent on deep attentiveness to the different ways in which we are drawn to God.
>
> The primary focus of theological reflection is the mystery of God and God's action in creating and redeeming. But because theological thinking struggles to see how all is illuminated by the light of faith, and how human reasoning may flourish through the organizing and gathering that faith calls us to and makes possible, theological thinking finds itself engaging and learning from conversation partners across many fields of human experience and intellectual exploration.
>
> Theology is also constantly attentive to the Church's tradition, believing that through Christ and the Spirit, God leads the Church into knowledge of the divine economy and mystery. Indeed, theological thinking itself has been brought into being by God's action and to further the work of gathering the saved into the harmonious community of Christ's body. Thus theology is a human activity, yet one founded in and ultimately dependent upon the work of Son and Spirit, in a way parallel to the performance of the Christian virtues that are both ours and yet gifts from God.
>
> Even as it is a gift, theological thinking occurs in this world; just as Christians mistake and even abuse the gifts they are given in the Spirit, theological thinkers go astray. And even when they do not, just as Christians find themselves inevitably living with both darkness and illumination in their spiritual lives, so theological thinking involves an intrinsic darkness as well as certainty, because through this thinking we advance towards one who reveals himself as transcendent, mysterious, and glorious beyond our comprehension.

I will begin to explore this definition by considering theology under the two headings of 'proclamation' and 'speculation.' Each of these sections of the chapter spends some time tracing the historical emergence of theological thinking. I follow this approach in part be-

cause understanding the historical development of concepts is an intrinsically good way to approach them, and in part because Catholic theology is committed to historical attentiveness as a consequence of seeing the flowering of Christian intellectual life as a gift of the Spirit, as part of the means by which the Spirit leads the Church 'into all truth' (John 16.13). As noted in the definition above, however, theology is both a human activity and one founded on divine gift. As the former it is one that may be misused, or misunderstood; consequently my discussion of theology under the rubric of speculation culminates in an examination of the anxieties proper to the theologian's activity even as she or he also reaches out 'to take every thought captive' (2 Cor. 10: 5). The final two sections of the chapter concern the relationship between Scripture and tradition as it was set out at the Second Vatican Council, and the nature of unity and diversity in theology, specifically with reference to the challenges and promise of current debates about theology as a professionalized activity within the modern academy.

(p. 7) Proclamation and the Prophetic

The Necessity of the Theological

When Peter, at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, proclaims to the assembled crowd that the prophesied outpouring of the Spirit is occurring and it is occurring because of what God has done in Christ, he is engaged in a theological act. Peter draws together prophetic texts from different places to make an argument (an argument that is as convincing as possible), and he interweaves those texts with a narrative and explanation. His reasoning here is not overtly philosophical, but it is rational; his concern is to explain what is now happening by showing how this act continues God's actions in Christ and this whole sequence of actions was prophesied in Israel's past. He brings to Israel's prophecy a new reading and proclaims it with clarity and force. Peter's speech is an exercise in expressing one of the core themes of Christian belief and thought, that God's redemptive action in Christ fulfils the history and prophecy of Israel, and reveals the arc of God's action, stretching from creation to recreation in Christ to the end of all things. In sketching these connections Peter shows us that theological thinking is at the heart of the proclamation of the Gospel. Peter's speech is also interwoven with wonder and confession. He has been caught by what is before him, by God's acting in that event, and his response is both rational and it is an expression of wonder and commitment.

But Peter proclaims in this manner not simply because he has read (or remembered) the Jewish Scriptures, heard Jesus's teaching, and then decided what to say by himself. Peter speaks within the experience of the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, his speaking and his faith come to him as gifts (Acts 2: 4. compare Matt. 10: 19–20, Eph. 2: 8). In Johannine terms, the proclamation of the apostles occurs because Christ has breathed on them, given them the Spirit and their mission (John 20: 22–3)—they speak as ones in whom Father and Son dwell (John 17: 21–2). Thus, while interpretation of the Scriptures is central to the theological task, the acts of interpreting, speaking, and proclaiming flow from the gift of the Spirit and have a place within the mission that Son and Spirit shape for the

Church. Faith then is a gift that enables understanding and stimulates exploration of God's actions and being (the concept of faith as a gift is discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

From elsewhere in Acts we can see that theological thinking, even when agonistic and appearing as a result of argument, may also be the result of Son and Spirit at work. Acts itself famously records something of the dispute between Paul (and Barnabas) and the apostles in Jerusalem about the necessity of physical circumcision. After 'much debate' (Acts 15: 6) Peter argues that the same Spirit has been given by God to gentile and Jewish converts alike, and the assembly listens to Paul and Barnabas describe all that God has done through these gentiles. Then James speaks, alluding to a number of texts, and quoting extensively Amos 9:11–12 (Acts 15: 16–18). As Peter had done at the beginning (p. 8) of the book, James offers his view as an exegetical exercise, but here he does so in the context of dispute and debate, struggling to recognize where God is acting. Acts 15 is also a fascinating text because here we see the developing Christian community being led to a reinterpretation of its practice in the light of God's continuing testimony in that community. The interpretation that occurs here is radical and unpredictable, and yet in drawing it out of the community God shapes also a harmony and continuity with Israel's history of prophecy about the role of non Jews.

One of the other ways in which theology reveals that it is an act of proclamation is in its use of philosophical concepts. In Acts 17 Paul is famously drawn to address an audience of Athenians (including some philosophers) who are fascinated by the new teachings. Paul speaks to them of the God who made all things and gives all things breath, the God who is not dependent on the world, and the God who providentially orders events. It is this God in whom we live and move and have our being (quoting the Greek poet Aratus *c*.310-*c*.240 BC). But it is not only this last quotation that reveals Paul's philosophical engagements. In the previous sentences Paul says:

> the God who made the world and everything in it … does not live in shrines made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he gives to all men life and breadth and everything. And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God …
>
> (Acts 17: 24–27).

Paul draws together traditional Jewish and emerging Christian positions (God as the Creator of all) with themes developed in earlier Greek traditions and some roughly contemporary Jewish traditions (God as the transcendent and inexhaustible source on which all depends and who draws all to himself). Paul is both melding these themes to appeal to his audience, and he is also taking some initial steps to articulate a view of the whole of creation in the light of his transformed Judaism. Paul ends his speech by calling us to repentance, but he links this repentance to the need for us to repent from idolatry in thinking of God.

Thus different modes of theological thinking are intrinsic to the task of proclamation; they appear as the apostles are driven out into the world by the Spirit and the risen Christ. Not only is theological thinking part of proclamation, it also rests on a gift of the Spirit, and is part and parcel of the manner in which God determines to speak and be heard in the work of redemption. It is 'part and parcel' not because there is any need for human beings to make up for a failure in the Word's communication, but as part of the manner in which the Word has chosen to communicate. God has chosen to communicate through drawing us into contemplation of Father, Son, and Spirit, and of all things in relationship to them. Theology aids and is part of proclamation not only because it produces greater clarity or more convincing formulations, but also because it shows God enabling and calling Christians to take captive human thought, reforming and freeing it to view all things more accurately in the light of Christ (for powerful reflections on this theme see Imbelli 2014).

(p. 9) In a 1986 lecture delivered in Toronto, the future Pope Benedict XVI argued that theology is founded in the act of conversion, but conversion understood as an act of accepting that, as Paul says, 'it is no longer I who live, but Christ within me' (Gal. 2: 20). Cardinal Ratzinger interprets Paul's claim in the context of Galatians as a whole and particularly Paul's insistence (Gal. 3: 27–9) 'as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus'. The language of Galatians is analogous to that of the 'Body of Christ' in 1 Cor. 12 (compare Rom. 12: 5, Col. 1: 18, Eph. 1: 23). This account of conversion pushes in two directions simultaneously. First, to be converted is to be drawn into Christ, and thus to become a new sort of individual, one who is also a 'limb' within the one person of Christ. Through this union with Christ (which begins in baptism and is fulfilled only at the end) Christians are given a share in Christ's proclamation of the truth of God. It is this sharing in Christ that is the foundation for the act of theological thought and speech. Thus, drawing together these emphases with the examples we have already seen in Acts, we may say that revealing and proclaiming in the apostolic period are part of a multifaceted reality in which Christ reveals and interprets himself, the apostles attend and hear, but they do so in order to proclaim, and as they proclaim Christ reveals and draws them on. In this hearing and proclaiming, theology is born.

This can seem a very abstract point, and so, second, Ratzinger argues we need also to note how, as a consequence of baptism, the new member of Christ also finds him or herself in a concrete body, the Church. In this context each baptized Christian finds him or herself directed towards a common inherited faith held within that body (Ratzinger draws our attention toward Rom. 6: 17); each finds herself in a structure of authority for deciding about the content of that faith; each finds herself also encouraged, drawn towards attention to others who are also members of that body (Ratzinger 1995). This lecture places in broader context a point I have already made: theological thinking is drawn out of Christians through the work of Christ and his Spirit. But here the emphasis lies on the work of Christ among and for the whole community of Christians drawn into him. This emphasis raises a number of questions about what this location for theological thinking

means in practice; for the moment I want to set these questions aside and explore in more depth the dynamic relationship between proclamation and interpretation, this time by looking not directly at the New Testament but at the gradual emergence of theological reasoning in the first few centuries of the Christian era. It is important that we do so because, while the foundations of theological thinking are shown to us in the texts of the New Testament, it was during the first few centuries of Christian history that the various dimensions of its mature form emerged.

From Bible to Creed

The twentieth-century theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar wrote:

> … theology in the Bible can have no fundamentally different form from later theology in the Church: each is an interpretive act of standing and (p. 10) circling around a mid-point that can indeed be interpreted, but is always in need of interpretation and has never been exhaustively interpreted
>
> (Von Balthasar 1989b: 103).

The earliest Christian communities interpreted the events of Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection in the light of the Jewish Scriptures, and those Scriptures in the light of Christ. Theological thinking begins in such interpretation—as we saw with Peter at Pentecost. Before we examine how what began with the earliest Christians grew and flowered, it is important to think for a moment about the ways in which those Christians created a language out of the Jewish Scriptures, from Jewish theological traditions, and from their experience in Christ. Some of the most important interpretive moves made by the writers of the New Testament documents involve taking up and reusing passages from the Hebrew Scriptures, interpreting texts anew by applying them to the events of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, bringing together quite surprising texts, and using small sections of text intending that we remember aspects of the text's broader context (one of the most famous examples of this last practice is Christ's quotation of Psalm 22 on the cross). However, much of this 'creating a language' occurs not through quoting discrete sentences or clauses of the Jewish Scriptures, but through interweaving its language and imagery into new modes of speech about the world in the light of Christ. Christians gradually move towards creating a new literary lexicon created for speakers of 'Christian'. A literary lexicon here is a dictionary of terms—here existing only in the minds of the community that knows how to use those terms—and a sense of how those terms may be used (I take the phrase from Irvine 1994). For a Christian who knew how to use this lexicon, for example, terms such as 'lamb of God', or 'Wisdom', or 'Spirit', took on a range of connotations, and possible connections to other terms, or possible patterns of usage. It was through this developing lexicon that early Christians wondered, worshipped, and reflected theologically (and this reflection itself also pushed Christians to develop how they understood many of their terms). While I want next to trace some themes in the emergence of Christian theology, it is important to remember that Christians continued to worship and reflect in the developing lexicon of their faith; these early modes of speech and re-

flection did not pass away, but remained in many ways the foundations of all Christian thinking (one of the most powerful accounts of this lexicon is to be found in Danielou 1956, although he does not use this theoretical language).

During the first two centuries of the Church's life, the Christian community came to recognize a set of texts that were read as a 'New Testament' complementing the 'Old Testament', that could be read in public during liturgical contexts, and which were taken to contain the gospel or faith that Christ had handed down to the apostles. Eventually they would come to call this set a 'canon' of texts. Christians read these two 'testaments' as a unified whole—albeit one also differentiated into different books, each with their own structure, themes, and style—as a unified witness to God's action in creating and redeeming through Word and Spirit. During the second and third centuries, one of the (p. 11) ways in which Christians spoke about the unity of these testaments, and about the basic principles of their faith was through speaking of the 'rule of faith', or 'rule of truth', or 'ecclesiastical rule'. Such phrases could be used to refer to short statements of faith, and also to a sense of the unity of the Christian faith (and even the unity of the Christian moral vision) taken to be at the heart of that which had been handed down since the apostles.

During the same period Christians also came to develop ways of reading and interpreting Scripture as a standard for belief and life. In particular, Christians read their unified Scripture by adapting techniques developed in the ancient world for reading texts. For example, they emphasized the importance of attending very closely to the story or plot of the whole text—or of an individual part of the text—as the context within which any one statement was interpreted. They also emphasized attending to an author's customary styles of expression, looking for particular rhetorical figures and tropes in the text, and carefully defining the meaning of terms according to customary usage of the time.

One of the ways in which terms were explored and defined was through the use of contemporary philosophical and 'scientific' traditions. This was especially so with ambiguous terms, and with terms used of God that used spatial, temporal, or anthropological language (that was taken not to apply to God as it applies to human beings). John 4: 24, for example, states that 'God is spirit'. Early Christians explored the verse in a number of ways, using contemporary philosophical accounts of what it means to speak of spirit to explain the verse's meaning and significance. At a number of points Scripture speaks of the Son of God as 'begotten' (John 1: 18; 1 John 5: 18; Heb. 1: 5). This term was eventually the subject of much controversy and definition. Famously, for example, Gregory of Nyssa catalogues different senses of 'generation', and then argues that none can capture the nature of divine generation. The adoption or adaptation of the methods described in this and the previous paragraph was a central moment in the development of Christian theology, helping to define what it meant for Christianity to be a scriptural faith, and for theology to place the reading of Scripture at its heart.

In both these cases early Christians would not have thought that their reasoning was necessary because of defects or inconsistencies in Scripture. Instead they gradually came to

articulate the principle that scriptural language is marked above all by God reaching down to humanity and speaking of God in a manner that human minds of all kinds could comprehend, revealing more through Christ than could previously be known, and then inviting humanity to look through the stories and titles and terminologies used in Scripture toward the realities of which they speak. For many, the model for this descent of the divine into human categories and ascent of the human is the descent of the Word becoming flesh and ascending to the right hand of the Father (later in the chapter I return in more detail to the ways in which early Christian thinkers linked theology to the project of thinking towards the transcendent).

At the same time, early Christian thinkers gradually developed accounts of why such a conception of theological thinking did not imply that only those with intellectual gifts could be truly Christian. Using Paul's terminology of advancing from consuming milk to eating solid food in 1 Cor. 3: 2 (compare Heb. 5: 12), some early Christians emphasized (p. 12) strongly that deeper, more intellectually developed understanding of beliefs did not involve possessing a new knowledge of the divine, or any new revelation. The basic publically taught language of the faith is a constant reference point for all; that some have intellectual gifts they may put at the service of the community does not make them better Christians. In fact it demands of them a striving for humility before the incomprehensibility of God, reverence for the language of the Scriptures, and an attentiveness to the needs of the community.

As will be clear from the last few paragraphs, as Christian theology developed, the patterns of thinking and interpretation that emerged remained deeply shaped by belief in the continuing action of Christ and Spirit in the Church. Just as thinking theologically began both with listening to God's word as it is written in Scripture *and* with attention to Christ as he is encountered in his work in and through the 'limbs' of his 'body,' Christians continued to assume that Christ led the Church. In this context Christian theological interpretation was often surprising and radical, in the sense of getting to the root, the core of a particular subject. One of the clearest examples of this process is the Nicene Creed. The particular combination of language and themes that it (and its advocates) used encouraged the development of increasingly sophisticated conceptions of God as eternally generative Trinity, drawing together themes that were previously only inchoate. At the same time, the very idea of a universal creed was a departure from the use of more local creeds. Gradually, over more than a century, this creed came to be used in liturgical contexts throughout much of the Christian world.

As may already be clear from the last paragraph, the appearance of the defined statements—such as the creed of Nicaea or, later, the definition of Chalcedon—should not be taken to indicate that theological thinking may be read as inexorably moving towards clearer and clearer definition. While the body of defined beliefs or dogmas has certainly grown over the centuries—although with increasing slowness—defining a belief has tended to stimulate and nurture new theological reflection as much as it restricts. The provision by the action of the Spirit in the Church of a fundamental set of Christian beliefs was also a guiding of the generative forces of the Christian imagination, the provision not sim-

ply of boundaries, but suggestions for thought. It is in both senses that Catholic theologians have taken and should continue to take them.

The radicality of some theological advances and definitions should not be taken to indicate that the history of theology is marked by an opposition between the radical and the decisively new on the one hand, and the well-established or the well-known on the other. Rather, the radical quality of which I speak occurs within the context of belief that God unfolds the divine mysteries in an ordered fashion and that the Spirit guides the Church. Radicality in this sense is a return to the roots of the faith, of what God has accomplished in Christ. In the next section of the chapter I expand a little on this idea by turning to the ways in which the Church constitutes the theologian's indispensable context.

Before moving on to that task, one more theme demands discussion. Sometimes the formula *lex orandi, lex credendi*—'the law of prayer or worship is the law of belief' is used to indicate the principle that practices of worship shape formulations of belief and shape theological thinking. This statement needs careful reflection. It is sometimes true in very precise ways. It does seem, for example, that growing devotion to Mary formed the context in which she was recognized as Mother of God at the Council of Ephesus in 431. And yet, sometimes it is far more complex; different sides in the fourth-century disputes over the Trinity seem to have taken traditional liturgical language to support quite different visions. Indeed, at some key points theologians advocating for particular themes helped to shape practices of worship. Famously, Basil of Caesarea in the late fourth century begins his *On the Holy Spirit* by noting that he has changed his Church's doxology in order to emphasize the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. In the first few hundred years of the Church's life, liturgical texts were still fluid, and it was relatively easy for theological developments to be quickly reflected in the Church's worship. This often occurred through subtle changes and additions to traditional texts, through subtle changes to the terms used in the Christian lexicon, and subtle changes to the sorts of things that were spoken using that lexicon. Through all of this the Church's liturgical prayer is (to varying degrees) a central context within which Christians learn how to speak their language, hear some of the most fundamental theological interpretations of the Christian faith, and learn something of the manner in which that language is also a guide to the mystery of God's presence and action. I say 'to varying degrees' partly because different Christians participate to different extents in that liturgical life, and in different periods of the Church's history far less (or far more) of the Church's liturgical language would have been comprehensible to or even heard by those present (for a powerful account of the liturgy as the context for Christian thought see Fagerberg 2007).

We have seen, then, ways in which the first few centuries of the Church's existence saw the emergence and flowering of theological practices that would undergird all later theological thinking. We will see more of them in this chapter's discussion of 'speculation' in a few pages. But first, we need to explore how what we have seen raises some central questions about the ways in which the Church constitutes the water in which the theologian swims.

Theology and the Church

We might begin here with one question. The centrality of interpretation within and for proclamation might seem to leave theology in a constant position of uncertainty. If interpretation is constant, where is there clarity and certainty? In the Catholic context any good answer to this question will include exploring what it means for the theologian's individual activity to be an activity within the Church (for an introduction to Catholic teaching on the Church see McPartlan in this volume). The Church is invoked here simply because the thinking that is drawn from us as we are drawn into Christ is both a thinking within and for the community, and a thinking that proclaims the truth of God. The Church, as community, is moreover led by the Spirit of Truth, and thus the individual thinker finds him or herself within a body that proclaims with authority. But I think we miss the multifaceted nature of the Church's role if we allow ourselves to (p. 14) imagine the only important question here to be one of where and how the Church exercises authority, where and how the theologian is 'free' to think what he or she pleases.

Christian thought emerged and grew through human beings thinking, arguing, praying, conversing, and disagreeing, however much it also grew and emerged through the action of Christ and his Spirit. Because faith and theological thinking are some of the tools through which God encourages and enables the restoration of the human mind, there is need of a centripetal force in our reflections, a speaking within all our speaking that can guide and organize and stimulate. This speaking within our speaking occurs in a number of ways. It occurs above all through God speaking his Word in the Scriptures. It occurs through the emergence in history of an authoritative tradition of teaching in the Church. But that speaking also occurs also through God orchestrating and giving life to the community of thinkers that constitutes the Church's theological tradition.

Over the past two centuries the Catholic Church has developed an increasingly complex language for delineating authoritative statements concerning Christian belief and action, and increasingly complex modes of describing the relative authority of those statements. From one perspective these developments reflect the Catholic Church's desire, in the face of post-Enlightenment questioning of all tradition, and its epistemological relativism, to assert its continuing claim to speak authoritatively about that which God has revealed. From another perspective, it is important to understand these important developments within the wider context of the Catholic tradition's emphasis on careful attention to a wide range of conversations within the tradition. Here we might note, for example, the development of the term 'dogma'. Over the past two centuries the term has come to mean something quite precise. A central reference point in modern definitions of 'dogma' is Vatican I's statement concerning faith in that which the Church propounds:

> by divine and Catholic faith all those things are to be believed which are contained in the word of God as found in Scripture and tradition, and which are proposed by the Church as matters to be believed as divinely revealed, whether by her solemn judgment or in her ordinary and universal magisterium
>
> (*De fide* 3).

A dogma is thus a proposition which has been clearly defined by a council or pope ('by her solemn judgement'), or one which is continually taught by the Church as a matter of revelation even though it has never been formally defined (on the notion of dogma see Rahner 1968a; Beinert 1995). This last category, obviously enough, has rather unclear boundaries. By the use of the phrase 'ordinary and universal magisterium' the text, however, speaks about the common teaching of the bishops of the Church as a whole, not simply the opinions of a single bishop or group of bishops. The term 'magisterium' refers to the Church's teaching authority as vested in the bishops (both as gathered together in an ecumenical council and as a continuous body of pastors and teachers) and the papacy; theologically the existence of the magisterium is a consequence of the Church's belief that Christ and his Spirit lead the Church into truth, a consequence of the belief (p. 15) that God speaks in his Word and testifies to that Word through leading the Christian community toward the eschaton (Nichols 1991: ch. 18; Beinert 1995a; Rahner 1968b; Dulles 2007; Gaillardetz 2003). In this context dogmas are given by God to the Church and command our assent; they constitute a central core of teaching, a central matrix of belief that can nurture the theologian's work and form a fundamental reference point. At the same time as the term 'dogma' took on this precise meaning, Catholic theologians also developed an account of the different degrees of authority inherent in, and hence different characters of consequent assent appropriate for, different types of official teaching and documentation. And yet, while these developments add a helpful clarity to the theologian's engagement with Christian teaching, they should not supplant the importance of learning to think theologically within the broader field of Christian doctrine and the diverse conversation of witnesses that are held up for us in the Church's memory.

One fundamental reason why theologians should learn to attend to this conversation of witnesses is because all those who witness to Christian belief, theologians among them, have long been said to share in Christ's 'prophetic office'. At Num. 11: 29 Moses deals with a crisis of authority. The Lord takes some of the power of the Spirit that had rested on Moses and gives it to the seventy elders of Israel. Two of these elders, Eldad and Medad, who had not even been present when the Spirit descended on the seventy, began to prophesy. Joshua expresses surprise and frustration at their seeming usurpation of Moses's authority. But, Moses says, 'I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them'. Prophecy comes through the gift of the Spirit and is to be desired for all God's people.

Isaiah 43–44 complements this episode in the wilderness. The Lord announces to Israel that the Spirit will be poured out—as springs from the dry ground—and when this happens members of Israel will take on themselves the name of Israel and Jacob. In doing so they will proclaim the Lord and 'witness' to what the Lord 'has proclaimed from of old'. In using the term 'witnesses' Isaiah returns us to a theme also found in the previous chapter, where the Lord calls Israel his witnesses because they know and believe and understand who is the Lord. Prophesying and witnessing are one. The prophet witnesses to the identity and constancy of the Lord because of the gift of the Spirit. From the earliest days of the Church, Christian thinkers have identified the prophesied pouring out of the Spirit on Israel with the pouring out of the Spirit on the Church at Pentecost. And thus, the

Church is prophetic because, in the Spirit, it proclaims and identifies its Lord. Prophecy here finds it focus not in prediction of the future, but in witnessing to the Lord and the character of God's acts in history past, present and future. The Church thus provides a context, a community within which the theologian finds a multitude of points of reference for thinking. The Church's teaching tradition should exercise a centripetal force in our thinking, but we are also called to attend to the sheer diversity of witnesses to Christ's prophetic presence.

It is against this background that we may best think about this question: how does the individual develop readings that are both faithful and radical? Consider the tools that the theologian uses. Certainly, theologians use logical tools to dissect and construct (p. 16) arguments (and I return to this topic in the next section of this chapter). Learning to follow arguments, and to see their strengths and weaknesses is an important skill for the theologian. At the same time, good theologians are also attentive to where and why particular aspects of theological argument are taken to be impervious to the logical gaze, where mystery is necessarily present. The presence of this mystery may be seen through attention to persistent discussions in the great writers of the Christian tradition; in many cases it shines through particular teaching documents of the Church.

In the past hundred years strong polemic against Protestant theology has given way to a deeper theological engagement. This has not meant that Catholic theologians have abandoned their distinctive commitments to the teaching of the magisterium, but it has meant that listening to and learning from the traditions of those not in communion with Rome has often been a vital source of renewal. The Second Vatican Council's constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, may be seen as providing a theological foundation for such listening and learning when it states that the Spirit is at work even in those Christians who are not in communion with Rome. The sanctifying power of the Spirit here works to strengthen faith and to draw all into peaceful union (*LG* 15). In this light it becomes easier for the Catholic theologian to see the importance of attending to theological discussions that occur within the Christian community very broadly. In the twentieth century, Catholic theologians also devoted much energy to recovering the diversity of resources offered by Greek and Syriac early Christian sources, as well as Latin. This movement was accompanied by a renewed attention to the theology of the Eastern Orthodox traditions and to the theology of those Eastern Christian traditions in full communion with Rome. Such patterns of engagement and attention help to reopen theological conversation perhaps undeservedly forgotten, and they focus our minds on where our own tradition may be supplemented and conversation broadened. Of course, opening conversations also requires an increasingly deep grasp of the nuances and core of one's own tradition—and this also has often been the gain of theology conducted in a broader ecumenical context.

The importance here of developing an ability to attend to the tradition as a guide or series of guides down theological paths that open before us, also begins to make clear the centrality in theology of arguments from fittingness, appropriateness, and harmony. An argument, or an analogy, or an image is theologically 'fitting' because it seems to someone well schooled in the Christian faith to fit with the basic insights, direction, and struc-

ture of that faith. In this sense arguments from fittingness have an aesthetic quality, rather than one that is primarily logical. For example, theologians have long asked ‘why did God save in this way, could we not have been saved in some other manner?’ The answer across different traditions has been consistent: God certainly could have saved by whatever means God chose. We, however, know only the mode of our salvation and cannot finally know why; we can only strive to see how it is fitting for God to work in this particular manner. Theological arguments have consequently taken many forms, drawing out particular images, connections, and analogies to show the character of salvation (exploring the many modes of discourse about salvation present in the New Testament’s riff on the language of the Jewish tradition). The power of these arguments (p. 17) comes from the skill with which they illuminate and fit with the most basic truths and actions of Christian belief. In a very similar manner, when theologians are faced with new themes or questions in human culture that call forth theological reflection, they frequently work by analogy, adapting and transforming to new contexts arguments developed previously, assuming there is some sort of analogical relationship between the old and the new. Such arguments require knowledge and a flexible imagination if such analogies are to be persuasive, and if the theologian is to avoid forgetting what has already been thought and said towards questions that remained unasked, possibly for centuries.

Arguments from fittingness are, from one perspective, a recognition of human incapacity and reliance on God; they are, in this sense, an encouragement to intellectual humility. But, arguments from fittingness also enable us to see how God has given his saving economy a rhetorical form. The divine economy educates us about what God has accomplished and persuades us of its truth, using a range of different terminologies and images. Each of these lays out for us different if complementary paths for the imagination. Thus, for example, in Romans 5, Paul describes the work of salvation as accomplished through the blood and death of one man taking on all the sins that were accrued through the sin of one man. The argument draws an analogy between the mode by which sin came upon the world and the means by which the world was redeemed. The bare analogy Paul offers suggests to us that we reflect on the many ways in which Christ’s action fulfils and overturns what has gone before, and on how so much of his life and ministry involves this dynamic. The passage also suggests a host of paths for reflection by invoking the long history in the Jewish Scriptures of the terminology of blood and sacrifice, and accounts of how the consequences of sin may be removed.

By meditating on such relationships, by exploring the many ways in which it is fitting for Christ to create them, we gradually come to speak more expansively, fully, and attentively about the mystery of God’s choosing to save us through the man Jesus Christ. But following such paths does not only lead us to recognize better the many dimensions of God’s redemptive economy, it also pushes us to reflect on how we imagine the rest of our world. Thus, for example, recognizing that God’s own power in salvation is manifest as weakness, has been a persistent stimulus for theologians to explore how all our notions of power must receive critique and examination. Through us being encouraged to see that which is fitting, and to imagine fitting parallels, analogies, and relationships, we gradually come

to envisage the created order in a new light, in the light of revelation and God's governance. Once again, reason is renewed and expanded.

Arguments from fittingness also remind us particularly clearly of the need for prudential judgements on the part of the theologian, and hence for a community within which such prudence may be learned and exercised. *Phronesis* (in Greek—in Latin the parallel term is *prudentia*) is a skill enabling judgement about the good and the bad, with reference to actual choices in the material world (as opposed to choices about the good in absolute terms unrelated to particular choices concerning the good). Being able to exercise prudential judgement well depends on one having internalized (or having been gifted) a range of intellectual and moral virtues that form our capacity for wise judgement. In the context of theological judgement as well as these virtues the theologian also (p. 18) needs to be imbued with a knowledge of scriptural language and the sorts of interpretive moves and connections that the great teachers of the Christian tradition have made (and remember thatAugustine and Thérèse of Lisieux are both doctors of the Church and hence 'teachers'!). Such prudential judgement also takes bearings from the present community of Christians, imagining how its arguments will be heard and received. (For one of the most compelling modern accounts of prudential judgement see Macintyre 1985: 222–225. See also Dunne 1993). The theologian who seeks the ability to make arguments from fittingness, thus needs a school, at least an imagined school for her thought. And this 'school' is provided by thinking and writing in the context of the Church. The theologian's judgement is best formed through attention to the teaching of exemplars within that body, and through developing attention to the one whose Spirit continues to work within that body (this discussion of fittingness will be deepened in the following sections of the chapter as we come to analogy, mystery, and anxiety).

By speaking of an imagination and judgement being formed, I do not mean to imply that theologians simply seek agreement with a tradition that we can speak of as teaching univocally. Through the history of the Church different theologians have offered different interpretations of core dogmas and how they relate to other areas of Christian doctrine; in some cases there are persistent schools of thought that have been developed over many hundreds of years. And thus, because the theological tradition consists in conversations and sometimes sharp disagreements, it also models patterns of disagreement, both by showing us what questions remain the subject of fruitful discussion, and how disagreements are best negotiated. Through attentiveness to the complex theological conversation provided by the Church's history, theologians receive an education for the creative imagination. And this is a good point at which to begin considering theological thinking not under the rubric of proclamation, but as a form of speculation.

Speculation

To speakers of modern English, 'speculation' is a word that indicates that which is not fully warranted by the facts, that which is experimental, a individual's thought-experiment rather than that which is commonly understood. But the original Latin family of terms

from which the English ‘speculate’ comes signifies the act of being a watchman, lookout, spy, or explorer. The term thus signifies a person and an activity of importance, someone who guards, explores, goes into difficult territory. Eventually, in later Latin, the term comes to mean something that partly overlaps with *contemplatio*, to contemplate the realities of which Scripture speaks. Philosophically the term is also bound up with Christianity’s long commitment (since at least the second century) to the belief that divine existence is immaterial and transcends our comprehension.

That God escapes what the Scottish Catholic poet George MacKay Brown called the ‘five folded senses’—folded into themselves, leading us to think that they encompass the (p. 19) nature of reality—is ancient enough. Texts such as Isaiah 55: 8–9 express the transcendence of the divine very clearly:

> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

But it is possible to conceive of such transcendence in materialist terms, and conceive of God as possessing only a larger body than human beings, a body of a unique type. During the second century after Christ, Christians followed and adapted a line of thought, already developing within Hellenistic Judaism, that drew from Greek traditions a notion of the divine as an immaterial reality, a reality not marked by space, time, and (for most thinkers) composition. Christian thinkers found such ideas a clearer and deeper way of expressing their fundamental insights concerning the power and transcendence of God and God’s status and role as Creator (for a particularly clear presentation of the principles involved here see Sokolowski 1995: 21–52).

Thus, most clearly, the seventh chapter of Wisdom (probably dating from around or a few decades prior to the time of Christ) speaks of the divine Wisdom thus:

> Because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things. For she is a breath of the power of God … Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things …
>
> (Wis. 7: 24-27)

A quite traditional language of breath has been transformed by being interpreted in a passage that celebrates the ability of divine Wisdom to penetrate, act in, and renew all things without being herself changed. This latter set of themes seems to draw on some aspects of the Platonic tradition to offer a new account of divine presence and action. Christian thinkers soon came to draw extensively on this stream of Jewish thought and on its classical predecessors and contemporaries. Such ideas brought with them a particular vision of contemplation and thinking about the divine, one that emphasizes the need to think beyond the categories of time, space, and composition that mark our existence—and much of the biblical language about God. And yet, as I discussed earlier in the chapter, early Christian thinkers and their successors could argue plausibly that such themes are

prefigured not only in Wisdom, but also in such texts as Acts 17, Heb. 8: 5 and 9: 23. At the same time, even as we note the rapid and radical expansion of such hints through the course of early Christian thought, we should see this shift as the result of the Word drawing out from the Scriptures interpretations that the Word intends for the Christian community.

Adapting these philosophical themes involved also adapting ancient traditions of dialectic and logic. These tools were close cousins to the simpler tools for marking distinctions used by all literary critics that I have already mentioned, and so a set of techniques for making distinctions, for classifying, and for abstraction came to be a standard part of the theologian's toolbox, if in more or less complex versions. Traditions of dialectic (p. 20) and logic were used by ancient philosophers—and hence by those Christians who borrowed them—as key tools for making the sorts of distinctions and abstractions that aid the human intellect in the task of grasping fundamental features of immaterial transcendent existence. Such notions of intellectual ascent were not only adopted, but also adapted by Christian authors, connected with particular visions of the importance of intellectual humility, for example. But the adoption of these techniques and their accompanying metaphysical dynamics marked the character of theological speculation ever afterwards.

In discussing theology as proclamation, I spoke of Peter's wonder at the resurrection of Christ and at the relationship between Christ and Israel's prophetic history. Here we see another aspect of the wonder that drives theological reflection, wonder at the transcendent and at the creation as the product of a transcendent source. This wonder is intrinsic to human existence, and it is something that is (or should be) also awakened and nurtured by the theological tradition's articulation of the divine as the transcendent source of all. Wonder and imagination are not, then, the opposites of order and discipline. The techniques of abstraction and making logical distinctions that Christians drew in through an engagement with classical traditions constituted an intellectually arduous discipline used throughout the Christian community's gradual process of self-definition. At the same time this discipline was breathed out in the form of an increasingly rich series of attempts to see the created order in relationship to its Creator. The history of theological reflection may thus be seen as the history of a disciplined wonder. This is not to say there are not constant tensions between wonder and disciplined thought. But it is to assert that such tensions are not fundamental: the disciplining of thought may awaken and nurture the wonder that is a fundamental feature of human thought (for some parallel reflections on theology and wonder see Nichols 1991: 18–24, 56–57).

One of the great themes and tools of Catholic theology, and one that is appropriately mentioned here, is analogy (see the more extended discussion of Desmond in this volume). At its most basic level, analogy is an essential feature of Christian thought because of Christian insistence on God's transcendence of the creation. This means that when we explore what it means for God to 'beget' a 'Son' or 'speak' a 'Word' we are driven by the very language of Scripture to contemplate how such terms apply, in what ways they do and do not grasp something about God. Similarly, if we are to speak about divine and human goodness, or even existence, we need to explore questions about the language we use. Such a

practice raises linguistic, metaphysical, and theological questions. At the metaphysical and theological level, however one construes the linguistic issues involved in analogical speech, the necessity of analogy in this case presupposes a view of the relationship between the Creator and the creation—both in terms of what we mean when we say that God transcends created conditions, and in terms of ways in which we think that the creation is able to provide a resource for our reflecting its Creator.

These last considerations have been the subject of some fierce debates between the Protestant and Catholic traditions. For some Protestant theologians, the Catholic tradition underplays the centrality of revelation when it envisages the world as in many and (p. 21) various senses reflecting its Creator and enabling our contemplation of God. Within Catholic tradition there is a range of perspectives about the extent to which the human mind is able usefully or accurately to see the Creator reflected in the creation (especially given the extent to which sin cripples our powers). But there is agreement that in providing us with Scripture, God's economy speaks to us in a language that demands analogical reasoning and provides a guide to our use of the creation's reflection of its Creator. Once again, God's economy calls forth styles of speculation and contemplation that while fraught with risk, are shaped by the community within which they live, and which are part of the divine renewal of human reason and imagination within their created home (for a fuller account of these differences see the debate gathered in White 2010). Learning how to reason analogically is, thus, a key part of Catholic theological thinking, and it is another key way in which theology may be seen as disciplined wonder. Analogies are drawn from us as we wonder at God's act and at God's creation, and theological tradition helps us to awaken, sustain, and discipline that wonder. Of course, analogy here rests on God's transcendence, and any discussion of it needs complementing by a discussion of mystery in theology—to that we will come.

In the past two centuries the manner in which Catholic theology engaged and adapted classical philosophical traditions has come under much critique. This critique has charged that Christian thought became indebted to Greek traditions that are not 'biblical'. In particular the accounts of divine existence that Christian thought has made central since the second century have been criticized as not grasping the dynamic, personal, and dramatic nature of the God of the Bible. This sort of critique of classical Christian thought has been a significant force in modern Protestant theology, but has faced far stiffer examination in Catholic contexts for a number of reasons. Catholic theology insists that Scripture is read both in the light of attempts to understand the intentions and contexts of its human authors and editors, *and* in the light of the Church's faith. New depths in Scripture are found when it is examined in the light of the faith that grew out of interpreting it, the faith that is a gift of the Spirit. Thus it is highly problematic to identify only one way of reading Scripture as grasping *the* 'biblical' meaning. At the same time, Catholic theology receives the emergence of the Church's creedal and magisterial tradition as a gift of the Spirit's guidance. Against such a background it makes little sense to jettison philosophical perspectives and arguments that are intrinsic to that teaching tradition.

But, alongside these specifically Catholic concerns, more recent scholarly work across a broad ecumenical spectrum has also shown how the simple characterization of biblical texts as devoid of metaphysical commitment, or as devoid of reflection on the nature of God's existence beyond the categories that mark the creation is unconvincing. It may well be that Catholic theology is deeply committed to particular accounts of divine immateriality and transcendence, but these accounts develop questions that are posed within Scripture. These accounts have also been *adapted* to Christian usage, enabling us to speak of a Triune divine life that is transcendent and yet also personal and dynamic (a nice example of how to approach the debates here is provided by Levering 2004).

(p. 22) One of the most important ways in which we can most clearly see the importance of 'disciplined wonder' in theological speculation is by examining why theology has long been termed a 'science'. The most famous source for this description is St Thomas Aquinas who uses this language at the very beginning of the *Summa Theologiae* (on Thomas see Slotemaker and Zahnd, this volume). The *Summa* is divided into questions, and further subdivided into smaller questions called 'articles'. In the second article of the first question Thomas asks whether theology—he uses the phrase *sacra doctrina*, 'sacred teaching'—is a science. Surely it is not, he objects, because a science proceeds from 'first principles' that are known in themselves, and theology depends upon revelation. His answer to this objection is that sciences fall into two kinds. Some (such as arithmetic) proceed on the basis of principles that are simply known by the light of the intellect, while others have principles that are drawn from a distinct discipline—music, for example, drawing its principles from arithmetic. On this analogy, 'sacred doctrine' is a science in the second sense because revelation gives us a body of knowledge, *scientia*, that is otherwise known only to God and to the blessed in heaven (*ST* I, q.1, a.2). In the next question we learn a little more. *Sacra doctrina* is in fact a 'sort of image of divine knowledge' (*quaedam impressio divinae scientiae*) because God knows *all* things simply, but we know things through acts of distinction and separation. We also know of God through allusion and metaphor—it is not by afterthought that Thomas culminates the first question of the *Summa* with a discussion of whether it is appropriate for theological thinking to use metaphors, and whether it is appropriate for Scripture to have many senses.

At the same time, Thomas tells us that the subject of theology is God and all other things insofar as they relate to God (*ST* I, q.1, a.3). This answer is expanded in the seventh article where Thomas argues, against some other contemporary descriptions of the subject matter of *sacra doctrina*, that theology considers God and all things ordered towards God (*ST* I, q.1, a.7; Bauerschmidt 2013: 46–67; Torrell 2005: 18–36) Finally, for the moment, Thomas discusses the character of arguments in theology. In article 8 of the first question Thomas insists that theology argues *from* its first principles, rather than *for* those principles, as if they could be themselves proved. But this is nuanced carefully when he claims that theology certainly can offer arguments in defence of a particular set of principles being appropriate, as long as the person with whom one argues accepts Scripture as the revealed word of God. Where an interlocutor does not accept those principles, all one can do is to show that their objections to faith ultimately fail (*ST* I, q.1, a.8).

It is easy from this to infer that Thomas presents theological argument as a matter of ever more precise logical argumentation. In fact Thomas makes central in his vision of theology arguments *ex convenientia*, arguments 'from coming together, fittingness, or appropriateness'—precisely the sort of arguments discussed at length in the previous section of the chapter. For example, Thomas uses the philosophical principle that Good is naturally diffusive and overflowing to help show that it was appropriate or fitting that the Word would become incarnate, and that the Father eternally gives rise to a Son and a Spirit in the Trinity (see Marshall 2005: 10–11). Thus the language of 'science' is an (p. 23) analogy; it helps us greatly, but it should not distract us from the ways in which our theological thinking both remains analogical and dependent on revelation and grace for its principles.

As well as the language of 'science' Thomas also talks of *sacra doctrina* as 'wisdom'. This terminology is both biblical and yet filled out and explored by Thomas in the light of Aristotle's definition of wisdom as that which considers the highest cause and hence understands the place of all subordinate causes (*ST* II II, q. 45, a. 1). In this sense, the definition of theology as wisdom emphasizes that the theologian seeks to know, insofar as the human mind can, what God knows as God knows. Theology does not only deduce from principles, but seeks God's own knowledge (see Johnson 1999). But this only takes us so far; we must also ask whether wisdom is something we can learn by studying or whether it is a gift from God. We must ask this question because wisdom is listed as one of the gifts of the Spirit at Isaiah 11: 2. Thomas draws an important distinction (*ST* I, q. 1, a.6). Wisdom is that which enables us to make judgements, and we sometimes make judgements by what Thomas calls 'inclination', by possessing a virtue that enables us just to judge or act appropriately. In this sense we may make judgements wisely because we have the gift of wisdom itself from the Spirit. But we also sometimes judge by 'cognition', by studying what the virtuous person would do in a given situation. And in this sense we may copy the wise person and learn by study even if we do not possess the virtue itself.

How do these two types of wisdom relate? Although Thomas does not offer us a clear answer to this question, it is important to understand a little more of the picture he does provide. Thomas insists both that all the baptized have the gift of wisdom *and* that the student of theology learns by imitation. How can we resolve this paradox? We need to note, first, that Thomas sees the gifts of the Spirit as building on the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love which are also given in baptism. These virtues give a person a participation in divine grace. Wisdom, as a gift, helps to perfect the mind and enables it to follow correctly the promptings of the Spirit, enables it to make judgements about divine realities (and it is interrelated with the gift of understanding). But God also gives different forms of the gift of wisdom in order to form the Body of Christ. Some know more; others are given wisdom in such a way that they can teach well (*ST* II II, q. 45, a. 5). All this is true of wisdom as a gift.

As a virtue (although it is only improperly named a 'virtue'), wisdom is acquired through study and helps the intellect make judgements about the highest cause and all things in relationship to that cause (God). Studying and acquiring this virtue may certainly help to

train and hone the mind. But, for the baptized Christian, wisdom acquired through study is enfolded by the gift of wisdom and this has significant consequences for how we should envisage that study. At one 'end' true judgements about the final cause, God, are only possible through the work of the Spirit and the gift of wisdom; reason itself cannot get there. Hence, we must remember that even though our power of reasoning grows as we study, our ability to judge rightly about God comes only through God's gift, not our own efforts. At the other 'end,' all baptized Christians already have the gift of wisdom in some form, enabling them in the most fundamental ways to judge that the faith handed to them speaks truly of God, even if they cannot articulate their belief (p. 24) with great philosophical skill or act as famous teachers of theology. Thus in a series of sermons on the Apostle's Creed Thomas said:

> None of the philosophers before the coming of Christ was able to know as much about God, and about what is necessary for life, as one old woman knows by faith after Christ's coming
>
> (quoted at Marshall 2005: 1. For the full text see Ayo 1988: 20).

Once again, the wisdom one may learn through study is taught its limitations, and reminded that it is only of salvific usefulness through grace. This circumscribing of the wisdom we may learn through study should not be understood, however, as a call to abandon study or imaginative Christian speculation, as a firm statement of the irreducibility of faith given us by God, and a firm insistence on the inability of the human mind to save itself. Christian speculation is a noble imitation of that which God gives those who are wise through gift.

The dynamic explored here with reference to wisdom, is also true in Thomist tradition of a series of closely interrelated discussions concerning the virtues. In this discussion the three foundational 'theological' virtues of faith, hope, and love are given to the Christian, 'infused' into the Christian at baptism as a foundation for a life which will restore the soul. These gifts enable human beings to reach toward happiness in God. Thus, by the gift of faith God provides the intellect, the power of human thinking, with some principles of belief that appear reasonable through a divine light given to the mind. Through the gifts of hope and love we may love that to which those principles point. The seven gifts of the Spirit (including wisdom and understanding) are given as an aid to this restoration of the human soul. In its full density this picture is sustained now only by those most committed to a Thomist vision of theology, but once again, from it we learn that theological speculation finds itself ultimately only imitating what some have by gift, and only an ultimately effective exercise for the soul when shot through with awareness of our dependence on revelation and on grace (for a good discussion in this tradition of the role of such gifts in the Christian life, see Cessario 1996).

One last piece of terminology that needs to be introduced here is that of 'mystery'. One of the greatest of nineteenth-century Catholic theologians, Matthias Scheeben, entitled his early summary of Christian teaching *The Mysteries of Christianity* (originally published in 1865, the best version is the rather different revised text published in 1941). He did so to

emphasize that through revelation we have knowledge of truths that remain hidden in God, of realities that will only be seen in the final vision. To the exploration of these mysteries we are called, but we must explore them while recognizing what we do not yet see. Scheeben speaks of the mysteries as shedding light in darkness: 'Why does the dawn exercise so enchanting an influence over us … Not because the light is mixed with darkness, but rather because it disperses the darkness that surrounds us, and brings in its train the light we have yearned for …' (Scheeben 1947: 6). A mystery is a truth that cannot be grasped by our normal means of knowing, that we can perceive only through a supernatural revelation, and that we can only explore through analogy (p. 25) (Scheeben 1947: 10–11). The more we come to know these mysteries, the more we will see that each can only be understood in the context of the harmony that links them all. How will they be seen and understood at the end? Scheeben's theology emphasizes the glorification and deification of the human being. God's presence unleashes the full beauty and radiance of the human being, who is enabled to share in 'a knowledge that in itself belongs to God alone' (Scheebn 1947: 658). This approach complements Scheeben's insistence that only by grace do we come to see the true beauty and interaction of revealed mysteries; as we struggle to understand we must grow also in acceptance of the grace that is offered. This process of transformation is completed not with us finally seeing, but with us being drawn into union and seeing, knowing by the gift of transformation and immediate divine presence. Scheeben quotes a passage from Proverbs that only appears in the Latin Vulgate: *qui scrutator est maiestatis opprimitur gloria* (Prov. 25: 27: 'he that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory').

One of the fundamental attempts at exploring the notion of mystery in twentieth-century theology comes from Karl Rahner, first published in 1959 (on Rahner more generally, see Marmion this volume). Rahner attempts to criticize the idea of theological 'mysteries' that are understood as a) mysterious because they *in this life* resist comprehension and, b) as primarily understood to be propositional in nature (for a critique of Rahner's antipathy to the 'propositional', see Wahlberg 2014). Rahner argues that mystery is primarily a quality of the 'the nameless being who is infinitely holy' that we experience as the direction in which human transcendence points (Rahner 1966: 49ff). The Trinity, the incarnate Son and the Spirit active among us are not 'intermediate mysteries' standing between us and the unitary mystery of God, they are the form of the mystery, the true mystery of God as the one who draws near as mystery (Rahner 1966: 71–72). When we think about the vision accorded the saved at the end of all things we can certainly speak in a secondary sense of mysteries of faith being rendered perspicacious, but the core of this final vision is an immediate sight of the mystery itself, an immediate encounter with divine incomprehensibility, not the removal of mystery in its most important sense (Rahner 1966: 54–55).

There are important differences between these two accounts, but in vital ways they are at one. For both, a discourse of mystery in theology must be grounded in an account of God's own graceful approach to humanity and in the arc of salvation which leads towards participation in him (with both one might compare the account of Gabriel Marcel, and his insistence that we are addressed by mystery; see Marcel 1950: 204–219). And thus this discussion of mystery returns us again to one of the central themes of this chapter—theol-

ogy is a human activity and yet one called forth within the body of Christ as it is drawn towards participation in the divine life.

Anxieties

The act of speculation carries thus both the sense of looking towards a goal, and that of risk. To speculate is to set out on a path down which we are drawn, and yet setting (p. 26) out down this path necessarily involves risk. On the one hand, to speculate is to look towards the realities that found and govern that which most appears to our senses; it is to look towards that which is most important and without which the rest of our understanding is only ever partial. In this sense, Catholic theological thinking has long seen speculation as at its very heart. On the other hand, to speculate is an activity that should induce a certain set of anxieties, a set of instinctive concerns about the relationship of one's thoughts to some key points of reference.

At one level these anxieties are vital though not specifically Christian; they are anxieties that all of those engaged in the disciplines of the humanities (at least) should feel. Theologians should ever feel the pressure of two questions: how well are we following the arguments of those we seek to understand, present, use, critique?; how well do we understand the context and questions of those we investigate? Christian theology—certainly in its Catholic form, but across a wide ecumenical range—finds itself constantly caught up in narratives of its past. What did and did not happen, what was and was not thought is constantly taken as implying, justifying, or demanding particular patterns of thought now and in the future. In such a heavily traditioned context an ever deeper knowledge of those included in such foundational narratives is fundamental. Attending to the complexity of arguments is a basic skill that the theologian must cultivate, and developing an appropriate anxiety that something may be missed in one's understanding of another is an essential constituent of such attention. Have we understood not only the course of an argument, but also have we understood the unstated assumptions that shape that argument?; have we understood why *this* is argued when we might have expected *that*? The need for us to allow such an anxiety to flourish is all the greater when we remember that God has led us in and through a tradition that holds up to us pivotal moments of definition, and many exemplars for our thought (see Ayres 2015).

Similarly, just as we must nurture anxieties about those we study, so we should allow to grow certain anxieties about ourselves. Theology, philosophy, and a wide range of humanities disciplines over the past century have made us increasingly aware of ways in which we are easily blind to our own context and assumptions. We read, for example, biblical discussions of 'mercy' and 'justice' and 'love' all too easily as if those terms did and should mean the same as they do within the particular social and political discourse of our particular location. Attempts to recognize aspects of our contexts may be seen right across the territory of modern theologians, in those who have written about theology and gender, in those who have written about questions of political, racial, and social justice, and in virtually all those who have been concerned to highlight the distinctions between biblical language or cultures and our own. Thus growing attention to what about our own

context we take for granted, what we assume to be the 'obvious' meaning of terms and injunctions is also essential for thinking that is both logically tight and theologically creative. Noting the importance of cultivating such anxiety is not, however, merely a matter of becoming increasingly self-aware. It is also a matter of developing the theoretical resources to analyse one's location, and the skills to see the presuppositions that such theoretical perspectives themselves assume.

(p. 27) There is a fourth anxiety found in many fields of intellectual endeavour, but which also takes on a distinctive Christian cast. What anxieties should we feel about the new in our arguments? We write now in an age that values 'the new', and most theologians find themselves educated and socialized into modes of thought that implicitly identify striking newness in conception and agenda as a key marker of significant thought. In some ways such a linking is certainly warranted. If theological speculation is in part called forth to enable human beings to take every thought captive, then engagements with new fields of human thought is a good. Attempts to face the new questions of our time are to be encouraged. And, once again, if theology is not only a traditioned enterprise, but also one that is founded on a view of God's guidance of the Church's theological reflection, then increasingly sensitive and multidimensional accounts—new accounts—of that history and of key exemplars of thought within it must also be a good.

But our celebration of the new carries with it the risk of amnesia, and here anxiety is appropriate. How far are our questions and our solutions new? One of the most important complements to such an anxiety is some awareness of the ways in which newness has entered theology. Occasionally newness does indeed enter through the work of an original genius breaking with what had previously been thought (the form of newness that we perhaps most easily desire for ourselves!). But newness enters more often by stealth, through the restating of the old in new contexts, in a different order, in slightly different terms. Newness enters often by old conceptions being used analogically, being extended and hence new resources seen in them. To promote such emergence we need to be closely attentive to subtle differences of context, ever attentive to the old, and wary about claiming that the wrong type of newness is underway.

This anxiety about newness is perhaps best understood not only as an anxiety that forgetfulness or naiveté mark our thoughts, but also as an anxiety that the real newness we seek be obscured. The real newness that we seek to bring to light is the radical nature of God's work in Christ. We might identify this as another appropriate anxiety or concern. How far are we, in our speculation, attentive to the central mysteries of the Christian faith? Theological thinking takes its cue from the act of God in Christ and the work of the Spirit in the Christian community; it aims towards the vision of God. On these central mysteries all depends, and our thoughts about the full variety of matters with which the theologian may be concerned are deeply affected by how well we attend to that core. This will be true wherever the theologian attends to a particular part of the theological whole and, particularly, when she or he works on new philosophical or ethical questions. In such contexts awareness of the whole provides bearings, basic orientations, and suggests analogical resources. The same is often true when the Catholic exegete is at work—even if

awareness of that whole serves to highlight that which diverges from it—and when the Catholic student of theological history considers the distinctiveness and contribution of particular figures or times.

Anxiety here is the appropriate companion to trust and wonder. Christian theologians should be attentive to certain forms of anxiety, but trust in the gift of faith and in the intelligibility of what has been revealed, and trust also that the Church led by the Spirit is the context within which anxiety should be held (even if the action of leading (p. 28) or the course along which the Church is led are not clear). When Cardinal Newman, in his famous hymn, wrote 'Lead kindly light, amid the encircling gloom …' he was not speaking directly of the darkness traditionally taken to be attendant on faith—an intellectual darkness which presses because we cannot understand the nature of God and God's action by our own efforts—but he speaks eloquently of the other types of darkness that accompany faith and theological reflection. The theologian thinks in a context where darkness also attends because of the tragedy now endemic in the sinful world. The suffering and injustice of which we are constantly made aware cannot but reveal ever more starkly the difficulty of sustaining hope and faith, and the necessity of grace for us to do so. In a way that is far less significant, and yet a significant challenge to those learning theology, awareness of the persistence of conflict within the Church throughout its history and of the multifaceted character (to put the matter cautiously!) of some of those held up before us in the Church's memory may provide its own darkness. Awareness of such darkness brings home constantly the need for grace, and it may also free us to attend more historically to many of those who are our exemplars, and to the complexity of the key moments of decision in the Church's history. We may so attend in the knowledge that there exists a light that reforms and which dawns and draws us on even though we are not yet fully illumined.

It will be helpful to complete this discussion by noting some ways in which theological speculation finds itself drawn to engage the full breadth of human attempts to investigate and wonder out the created order. First, one of the most significant shifts in theological methodology in recent decades has been the attention that many theologians have paid to the social and human sciences that have emerged since the nineteenth century. Sociology, anthropology, and psychology, to take three examples, have seemed to offer perspectives on human existence that transform accounts available in prior philosophical traditions. For a number of theologians the emergence of these disciplines offers a challenge to the traditional centrality of the relationship between theology and philosophy. In the past two decades especially, a number of theologians have both celebrated the importance of theologians attending to these new spheres of reason's activity and raised important questions about the character of our engagement. Most importantly, it is clear that in many cases these disciplines have embedded within them some fundamental assumptions that Christians will want to question. Thus, for example, some scholars have argued that sociology has long assumed a view of human society as fundamentally violent by nature (over the past quarter century, Milbank 2005--originally published in 1989--has been a fundamental point of reference). Others have noted that anthropological theory may consciously or unconsciously offer a view of human motivation and thought that leaves little space

for theological accounts of the human. But, just as the fact that ancient philosophers believed things that contrasted starkly with Christian teaching did not prevent Christians engaging them, adapting their insights to Christian ends, so Christians need to find patterns of listening, engagement, and adaptation that will enable them to learn from and incorporate these new fields of knowledge. The process of engaging these new sciences will no doubt take much time and will be controversial.

(p. 29) Over the past two centuries a similar process has occurred in the case of modern philosophies of history—and is still very much ongoing. The sense that close philological work on classical and early Christian texts would open up a new world and enable careful treatment of the development of ideas grew slowly in the Renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the growth of a range of philosophies of history. Some began to sketch constructivist views of developing human nature—emphasizing the power of humanity to construct different views of themselves and their worlds in different historical periods—others sketched accounts of a progressive evolution of human consciousness in history and, most famously, Hegel saw the world's history as the unfolding and dialectical development of the divine. Each of these drew on far deeper roots, many of them Christian, but all have contributed towards a broad reconsideration of the nature of history and of thought's relationship to historical contingency. One Catholic reaction to this has been a strong emphasis on realism and the ability of the mind to interrogate reality (seen clearly in much neo-Thomism), another has been to find ways in which some themes from this philosophical tradition may be explored through considering how Christian commitment to the Word's incarnation and the Spirit's guidance of the Church through history enable conversation (and thus, again, analogy comes in to play and clarity about core beliefs is vital). Throughout significant questions about the relationship of God and creation are under consideration. I highlight these examples to indicate some of the fundamental philosophical and theological challenges that the theologian faces today, and also to call to mind the subtlety and time such questions demand of us.

One final set of questions about the dialogue partners that theology may find should be posed at this point. May poets, novelists, and dramatists be theologians? In one sense the answer is a direct 'yes.' Of course, in such cultural forms writers may intentionally explore and address theological questions. Such explorations may be as much part of proclamation as any other theological genre because they may strike those with no Christian commitment, and they may be as speculative as any other because they can influence and shape the views of the most theologically astute and knowledgeable. Theological poetry, fiction, and drama are sometimes parasitic on or symbiotic with the existence of the broader theological tradition; in some contexts and periods of Christian history theological thinking seems naturally to have taken the form of verse (the poetic work of Ephrem the Syrian, *c.*306–373, is a now-famous example). Similarly, the work of the artist or architect may be theological, but here a symbiotic relationship with the broader written and heard theological tradition is perhaps even more central.

Following on, it is also an interesting question whether the work of non-Christian writers and artists may have theological resonance. The answer here is also, yes—though a different type of 'yes'. In one sense the work of non-Christian artists may show us with new force and clarity the character of the human creative endeavour and thus reshape how we envisage what it would mean for it to be transformed and realigned towards God. In another sense, the work of non-Christian artists may stimulate one schooled in the Christian theological tradition to new insights about that faith. Here that wider schooling enables recognition, but it may well also be that it enables recognition of a (p. 30) cultural phenomenon that calls out for theological attention, a feature of reality and human existence that speaks truly whether or not fully recognized by the non-Christian. Theological speculation thus seeks to know and love God, and it seeks to take captive and restore human intellectual work in all its dimensions. And, as an act that knows it aims at restoration and can do so because Christ has revealed the Father to us, these anxieties are interwoven with joy, and find their end in joy.

Tradition and Scripture

If the dynamic relationship between theology as a human activity, and as one called forth by divine action is one constant theme of this chapter, the second is a realization of the broad range of reference points necessary for someone to learn to think in a traditioned context. In this section I want to examine in a little more detail the concept of tradition expressed in the Second Vatican Council's document *Dei Verbum*, as this constitutes a fundamental point of departure for modern Catholic theology's self-understanding (for further discussion of this document see Dupuy 1968; Ratzinger 1969).

Vatican II insists that the one source of tradition is Christ. Christian theology and the life of the Church draw on both that which is stated in Scripture and on unwritten traditions concerning Christian pratice and the meaning of Scripture, but it is problematic to regard these as two distinct sources of tradition. Failure to see that all tradition ultimately stems from the Incarnate Word's self-revelation and guidance of his body the Church, misses something essential about how Catholic theology views tradition, and it makes it more difficult to see how Scripture and tradition are interwoven as 'sources'. This was the position that is enshrined in Vatican II's 'constitution' on divine revelation, *Dei Verbum* (for the Council in general, see D'Costa this volume; Wicks 2009 offers an extensive account of how the Council's texts should shape the practice of theology; Rush 2012). The document presents God's revelation in Christ within an overall account of salvation history:

> God, who through the Word creates all things (see John 1: 3) and keeps them in existence, gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities (see Rom. 1: 19–20). Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents. Then after their fall His promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved (see Gen. 3: 15) and from that time on He ceaselessly kept the human race in His care, to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of salvation (see Rom. 2:

> 6–7). Then, at the time He had appointed He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation (see Gen. 12: 2). Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this people to acknowledge Himself the one living and true God, provident father and just judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by Him, and in this manner prepared the way for the Gospel down through the centuries
>
> (*DV* 3).

(p. 31) This text begins the discussion of revelation by narrating something of what the documents of the Council elsewhere call the *historia salutis*, 'the history of salvation'. This idea had entered Catholic theology from Protestant contexts early in the nineteenth century and speaks of the history of God's interaction with history (Lehner 2014). For many at Vatican II, it was important that the Christian faith be presented in a way that emphasizes the core of the biblical message, and which presented Christ as the culmination of God's relationship to the created order. This was in part because one of the inspiring ideas of the Council was to present the faith in a way that would aid the search for Christian unity, and it was felt that such a presentation would make clear core truths that all Christians shared. It was in part because it was felt that only such a presentation would make clear to the modern world the core faith of the Church. Those who were unhappy about this emphasis thought that Catholic theologians should focus on clear and precise statement of theological truths, using methods of definition honed within scholastic theology. As an example of this focus on the history of salvation, the text does not at all deny the traditional Catholic position that God may be known through the creation, but it emphasizes instead the story of God's gradual revelation of his 'way of … salvation' through arousing hope and through raising up the great figures of Israel's history to lead his chosen people. It is within this story that the document comes to Christ:

> Then, after speaking in many and varied ways through the prophets, 'now at last in these days God has spoken to us in His Son' (Heb. 1: 1–2). For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men, so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God (John 1: 1–18). Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh, was sent as 'a man to men'. He 'speaks the words of God' (John 3: 34), and completes the work of salvation which His Father gave Him to do (John 5: 36; John 17: 4). To see Jesus is to see His Father (John 14: 9). For this reason Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making Himself present and manifesting Himself: through His words and deeds, His signs and wonders, but especially through His death and glorious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth. Moreover He confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal
>
> (*DV* 4).

While this section of the text begins with the language of speech, God's speaking through Christ, Christ's revealing occurs through his 'whole work' because to 'see' him is to see the Father. So Christ's words are part of the full reality of his life and must be interpreted within that whole. In this emphasis we see one of the central tensions of debate about how to describe revelation resolved through bringing together an emphasis on speech (and revelation's propositional content), and an emphasis on Christ himself *as* revelation. The relationship is a symbiotic one: Christ's life, death, resurrection, and the sending of the Spirit 'confirms' the revelation that God will raise us up. The second chapter of *Dei Verbum* links this vision of revelation to an account of the reception and interpretation of revelation:

(p. 32)

> Therefore Christ the Lord in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion (2Cor. 1: 20; 3: 13; 4: 6), commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, and to impart to them heavenly gifts. This Gospel had been promised in former times through the prophets, and Christ Himself had fulfilled it and promulgated it with His lips. This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by observances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit
>
> (*DV* 7).

There is a parallel here with the last pararaph we considered. Just as that paragraph articulated the relationship between Christ's speech and the events of his incarnate mission, so this paragraph links Christ's promulgation of the Gospel by his preaching with the apostles' own preaching. But, the paragraph also emphasizes that the apostles hand on the Gospel in a multitude of ways. The Gospel was taught through preaching, through example, and through various practices. And this handing on corresponds to their having received the Gospel through hearing and living with Christ, and by learning 'through the prompting of the Holy Spirit'. One final passage completes the path from God's action in Christ to the tradition of the Church:

> And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by an unending succession of preachers until the end of time. … This tradition which comes from the Apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (Luke 2: 19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through Episcopal succession the sure gift of truth. For as the centuries succeed

> one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfilment in her
>
> (*DV* 8).

Tradition develops under the aegis of the Spirit. It develops through the preaching of the Gospel (the Spirit providing for us a teaching tradition that ensures the Gospel is preached), through a deep, intimate understanding of the spiritual realities that we are given to experience (the Latin is *tum ex intima spiritualium rerum quam experiuntur intelligentia*), and through the contemplation and study of those believers who appropriately treasure the realities of the Gospel. This last category is described with reference to Luke 2: 19 and 2: 51, with reference to Mary's own attention to her Son's emerging ministry. The emphasis here is not on the clever but on the attentive, those who are attentive to the Gospel and those who are attentive to the Spirit's gifts. Those theologians who have contributed to the deepening of our understanding of the Gospel are certainly included in these categories—even though some do not seem to have fully participated in all categories of patient attention—but it is important to see how much wider is the group named here. Theologians, once again, find themselves caught imitating a group (p. 33) that includes many to whom the Spirit gives wisdom, their acquired intellectual virtues again circumscribed by grace. Through these sections of *Dei Verbum*, then, a consistent picture of revelation and tradition is built up in which Christ, through the whole of his incarnate mission reveals, and then ensures that that revelation is handed on and increasingly unfolded through the lives and attentions of those drawn to and by his Spirit. These paragraphs sum up much of the picture I have tried to develop about the role and context of theology through this chapter.

Dei Verbum goes on to consider the importance of Catholic biblical scholars balancing some themes from modern approaches to biblical study with traditional patterns of reading in the light of the Christian faith. I consider some aspects of that relationship briefly in the final section of the chapter, and it is more fully taken up later in this volume (see Levering, this volume; Healey, this volume). Instead, I want to continue to focus here on tradition, and consider in more detail the 'development' of doctrine. From at least the fourth century some theologians recognized that Christians were, at the least, able to state clearly doctrines that were only implicit in an earlier age. Even so, for many centuries theologians had little sense of what we might term historical development. After the Renaissance the question of how Christian doctrine may be said to emerge or develop came to be faced directly. In a somewhat simplistic way, we might contrast two approaches that were articulated clearly during the nineteenth century. For many thinkers, especially those associated with the Thomist tradition, it was possible to speak of doctrines being newly articulated in the sense that they were deduced logically from those already known or from statements of Scripture. The problems with such accounts include their refusal to pay sufficient attention to the complex process by which the classical formulations of belief gradually emerged from a variety of polemical contexts, and their failure to see the ambiguity of many scriptural texts.

Other thinkers, especially those associated with the Catholic theology faculty of Tübingen in Germany and John Henry Newman in England, made use of a variety of analogies to liken the emergence of doctrine to the development of an organism or an idea (see Kaplan and Coolman, this volume). Such a vision, while far more attentive to the history of doctrine, has its own problems. Such analogies push those who deploy them to read the history of Christian thought always in the light of the classical formulations of the creeds and conciliar statements in the later early Christian period. Doing so may lead us to ignore (again) the ruptures that also mark the emergence of classical doctrinal formulae, and it may lead us to pay insufficient attention to the ebb and flow of themes, images, and traditions that are not directly captured in those classical formulae.

While this second approach to the problem offers some real advances on the first, both assume that the path of doctrinal emergence is visible to the human eye. In 1948 Henri de Lubac emphasized that we must understand all theological formulation as an abstraction—even a necessary abstraction—from the mystery that is the person of Christ, the heart of revelation. Even as we attend to that which becomes 'explicit', unfolded from what De Lubac terms the 'definable fringe' of the mystery through the work of the Spirit, we must continue to recognize that we are still in the face of divine mystery (see de Lubac 1996). Such a position may help us better to recognize the sheer complexity (p. 34) of the process by which our creedal formulae emerged, the need for us to recognize the mysteriousness of the Spirit's work even as, in retrospect, we can certainly see the fittingness and rationality of the readings of Scripture that constitute the Church's beliefs.

Dei Verbum itself does not invoke any one of the options explored over the past two centuries. It is clearly influenced by such debates in its vision of the gradual 'growth in understanding' of the Gospel. But beyond this it serves as an exhortation to reflect, in a context of continuing philosophical and theological debate, on the tensions and possibilities for a Catholic theology that is both committed to a vision of Christ's Spirit guiding his body into the truth, and committed to recognizing historical density and inscrutability. Such a Catholic theology finds itself drawn ever back to confession that it is Christ (and his Spirit) who leads the Church without effacing human freedom. Such a Catholic theology finds itself also more intensely aware of the need for guidance through that history, not only by a teaching office but also by a community of theological exemplars. And thus the centrality of traditioned reasoning and the need for continuing reflection on how we understand tradition remains (see Ayres 2015).

Unities and Diversities

So far I have spoken of 'theology' as if this were a unified activity. Now in some senses it certainly is, but anyone studying the subject at university, for example, or anyone looking at introductory books in the field, would quickly discover that 'theology' is currently divided into a number of subfields, each with their own professional organizations and distinct traditions of scholarship—although terms vary, 'biblical studies', 'systematic theology', 'historical theology', and 'ethics' or 'moral theology' identify the main distinctions in

use today. Although the disciplinary divisions we see today have a long history, theologians have actually divided up their different activities in different ways over the centuries, and there has been much debate over the past few decades about how current subdivisions and specializations should interact. Considering these relationships is, in fact, an important and fundamental task for our generation.

In the earliest period of the Church's life, different genres of theological writing rapidly appeared. (For the history of theological practice Congar 1968 remains useful. But see, more extensively, for the period up until the Renaissance, Di Beradino and Studer 1996; D'Onofrio 2008 and 1998). Many of the most celebrated early Christian theologians were bishops; Augustine, Ambrose, and Basil of Caesarea all being good examples. It is, then, not surprising that the homily takes a central place in Christian literature, or that in a period that saw the gradual focusing and defining of Christian belief, polemical literature is of great importance. The early centuries also saw the appearance of the first scriptural commentaries. Many of these are actually sermon series. But we also see Christians adapting to their use styles of scholarly commentary developed in non-Christian philosophical and literary contexts. These commentaries discuss textual, philological, and historical detail as well as reflecting theologically. They are intended for (p. 35) a far more select and educated audience than sermon series on a biblical book. Already then, we see different dimensions of theological activity and different genres of writing appearing. This is so even if particular writers rarely opt for only one of these theological activities, and none yet belongs to a professional body that regulates their training and career in that specialism akin to those we find in modern university cultures.

In this early period we also see the rise of treatises which attempt a unified presentation and rational account of what Christians believe (some are polemical, some less so. Compare Origen's *On First Principles* and Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*). A new stage in the history of this style of composition is reached as authors focus increasing amounts of energy on compiling and negotiating between the opinions of their predecessors. In the eighth century, John of Damascus famously produced a massive work entitled *The Fountain of Knowledge*, of which the third part is called *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. This work was immensely influential not only within Greek-speaking Christianity, but also (eventually) in the Latin world. In the Latin world a similar attempt to sum up the work of the Fathers is apparent in the work of Peter Lombard, whose *Sentences* (in Latin *Sententiae*—statements or opinions) written *c.*1150 divides into four books. This work was an immensely popular text through the fifteenth century.

Thomas Aquinas's unfinished *Summa Theologiae* offers a rather different model. Thomas set out to offer a direct account of Christianity and its beliefs for the purpose of teaching.

> So, because, as we have shown, the fundamental aim of holy teaching is to make God known, not only as he is in himself, but as the beginning and end of all things and of reasoning creatures especially, we now intend to set forth this divine teaching by treating, first, of God, secondly, of the journey to God of reasoning creatures, thirdly, of Christ, who, as man, is our road to God

(*ST* I, q.2, *pro*.).

Each book is broken down into a series of questions, which are then subdivided into 'articles', each one of which is a smaller question contributing toward the whole. Both the *Sentences* and the *Summa* witness to some threads in the development of theological thinking that set an agenda for modernity. The relationship between one's own opinions and that of authoritative texts is central for both texts. Indeed, both may be seen as attempts to organize and systematize the teachings of a set of early Christian authorities. Thomas's *Summa* in particular can be seen as a setting out of methods for negotiating between authorities of varying degrees of importance—Scripture and its (seeming) inconsistencies, the various opinions of the early Christian theologians he favours, and various philosophical sources. While the style of argument he offers probably does not directly reflect classroom practice, it does reveal much about how he envisages the basic tasks of theological thinking.

In this negotiation it is noticeable that Thomas works hard to overcome differences of opinion among his Christian sources, often doing so by defining terms and importing distinctions that were alien to those sources. It is thus both true that he summarizes **(p. 36)** and systematizes a great deal of early Christian teaching with remarkable skill, and that he creates a vision of that teaching that modern historical study has tended to open up into a conversation and into traditions of argument and disagreement on some significant questions. This emphasis on organizing and negotiating between the opinions of different theological authorities, coupled with the use of precise philosophical terminology and styles of distinction is a key marker of a theological style known as scholasticism (the Greek word *scholastike* indicated the sort of leisure necessary for scholarly work, and came to denote a precise scholarly and philosophical activity. For a history see Leinsle 2010; Congar 1968: ch. 4–6 offers a still useful account of different theological schools during the scholastic period). Scholasticism developed slowly from the sixth century, fully flowered after the twelfth century, and remained a central force in Catholic theology through the middle of the twentieth century. (Scholasticism was, however, never the unique mode of Catholic theology; other styles persisted through the medieval and modern periods). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a particular interpretation of scholastic tradition was officially sanctioned as a key bulwark against the philosophies of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment that raised questions about the very possibility of coming to know with certainty the creation and its Creator. The same mode of theology seemed to offer the most reliable and certain way to sustain knowledge of the Church's long tradition.

Over the first half of the twentieth century Catholic theology saw a significant debate about the future of Catholic theology, its attitude towards its sources, its attitude towards modern philosophical schools Some theologians explored ways of embracing new philosophical approaches within a broadly scholastic approach (Karl Rahner is perhaps the most important example here); others maintained that forms of scholastic Thomism constituted the necessary way forwards; others—eventually known as the school of *ressourcement*—focused on recovering the foundational visions of early Christian theolo-

gians (and especially bringing Greek sources into dialogue with Latin). The story of these particular movements is told later in this volume; here I want only to note three things. First, the rival claims of these movements opened with new force a debate about the very idea of theological plurality. How far can there be different schools of theology?; how far do these different traditions witness to the tensions of the Christian intellectual tradition?

Second, this debate was interwoven with another concerning the manner in which the close study of the scriptural text was increasingly viewed as a distinct professional area of expertise—a debate that raised many questions about the relationship of this area of expertise to other theological activities (see Healey, this volume). The period since the seventeenth century had seen the rise of a discipline of biblical studies (which modern writers have often termed 'historical-criticism') that had sought to interpret the biblical text primarily by reconstructing the historical and social contexts within which texts were written and edited, and often by quite consciously rejecting readings developed in the Church's tradition or guided by the Church's doctrine. While this scholarly tradition drew on the gradual development of modern historical concerns since the Renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, it was particularly (p. 37) developed by Protestant thinkers from the eighteenth century on. From its inception Catholic scholars developed their own adaptations, often facing fierce criticism from the Church authorities. In the first half of the twentieth century, as movements seeking theological reform flowered, many Catholic theologians and exegetes saw these new approaches to Scripture as a means of revitalizing Christians' reading of the text of Scripture and understanding of Christ. At an official level Rome itself tried to promote a particular version of these methods through such initiatives as the founding of the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1909.

As the last sentence demonstrates, the development of these new models of biblical study did not occur only at the level of ideas. Indeed, beyond the founding of particular institutes, the adaptation of new modes of biblical study involved also the evolution of new social arrangements and models of professional life for the exegete. These models in many ways took their cue from the development of the modern research university during the nineteenth century in German-speaking and Protestant contexts (and in turn, such developments reflected deep shifts in views about what sort of knowledge is both possible and most to be valued). Catholic theological life was subject in part to somewhat different dynamics than its Protestant counterparts—for example, the location of much theological activity in the religious orders somewhat diluted the pull in Catholic circles of the allure of the research university divided into different professional disciplines. Yet, since the Second Vatican Council, those employed to teach biblical studies by Catholic institutions—and those Catholics who teach biblical studies elsewhere—have frequently found themselves trained within professional organizations and cultures that have at root been antipathetic to reading scriptural texts in confessional contexts and in the light of their histories of reception (this, of course, was no bar to many professionalized exegetes making theological statements, often on the basis that they were uncovering the theology of particular texts in their original contexts). And yet, at the same time, the past three or four decades have seen the rise of a considerable debate across a broad ecumenical spectrum about the character of theological interpretation, arguments for the centrality of premod-

ern exegetical emphases, new attempts to discern where and within what contexts modern emphases are most congenial to Catholic concerns. This debate has only begun to engage questions concerning the social and intellectual contexts within which exegetes are trained and professionalized, but it shows considerable promise for the future.

Third, just as the relationship of Catholic theological thinking and modern biblical studies has taken on particular complexities, in the same way the character of Catholic speculative theology has been complicated by the rise of modern historical concerns. At one level this is a problem that has beset Catholic theology since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Since then what was termed 'speculative theology' has found itself in a constant tension with what came to be called 'positive theology', by which was meant showing the sources of Catholic teaching in the early and medieval periods. How far may we consider attention paid to the central mysteries of the Christian faith in one of the great architects of Catholic thought (or attention paid to the circumstances in which that faith was articulated) also a speculative exercise? But this (p. 38) question has been further complicated in the past 150 years by two phenomena: the rise of historicist philosophies and the character of modern 'systematic' theology. In the first case, as I noted earlier, this philosophical tradition pushes the theologian to consider how far expressions of Christian faith are bound to particular cultural moments, and how far we can continue to speak of perennial truth. Catholic theology has found itself both drawn to some aspects of this tradition (not surprisingly given its interest in the unfolding reality of tradition), and yet deeply averse to others. In the second place, Catholic theologians, especially since the middle of the twentieth century has frequently found themselves drawn by a vision of 'systematic' or 'constructive' theology that tends to rely on rather simplistic historical narratives to shape characterizations of present tasks, and on visions of the theological task that value personal attempts to reconstruct theological teachings in the light of new philosophical themes. At one level such attempts are part and parcel of the speculative risk that I have named as intrinsic to Christian theology. But at another level, such work demands of the theologian a careful account of their theology of tradition, and an account of where and where not particular philosophical positions are now part and parcel of Catholic teaching.

Through all these controversies and developments we see Catholic theology's gradual, halting, and dense engagement with the intellectual threads from which modernity has been woven. We may highlight three questions that emerge from this discussion of current struggles over unity and diversity, questions which press on Catholic theology at the moment—three theological 'deathly hallows', the possession of which would perhaps enable a mastery of theology in our day. The first is how should we conceive of the relationship between the articulation of Christian teaching and the reading of Scripture?; the second is how should we conceive the usefulness of modern historicisms for Christian theology?; the third is how should we understand and nurture the unity of theology's different activities? Ultimately, Catholic theologians have great cause for optimism in facing these questions if they continue to recognize that the theological enterprise is something drawn forth among God's people as part of the action of Christ and the Spirit. Theological think-

ing occurs under the aegis of the Spirit and the Church's Lord, and we have every reason to hope that whenever anything seems dark, from darkness, light is drawn.

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The Scriptures and Their Interpretation

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Abstract and Keywords

Reflection on God's written word begins in the Hebrew Scriptures. Here the written text finds its home in Israel's liturgical practice. This is also the case in the New Testament, but here Jesus embodies, performs, and fulfils the Scriptures. In the earliest life of the Body of Christ, Scripture is again read within the life of the Christ-filled community and is ordered towards the union of the believer with Christ. The second half of this essay shows that the same perspective shapes Vatican II's Dei Verbum. The purpose of tradition and Scripture is to function as a mirror in which the Church may contemplate God and learn to live in holiness, and the interpretation and performance of Scripture enact the conversation of God with the Son's beloved spouse.

Keywords: Scripture, Bible, Dei Verbum, interpretation, Church, tradition, Vatican II

A handbook on Catholic theology should contain an essay on the Scriptures and their interpretation, but what should be included in this essay and how should it be structured? In describing 'the Scriptures' should one focus on the process of canonization and the list of books that the Catholic Church accepts as canonical? Should an investigation of the Catholic interpretation of the Scriptures proceed historically, beginning with the developments visible within Scripture itself, and proceeding to the early Church, the medieval period, the Council of Trent, and the early modern period, and finally to the past century's papal encyclicals, Vatican II's *Dei Verbum*, the documents of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, and Pope Benedict XVI's apostolic exhortation *Verbum Domini*? Or should one focus on the actual practice of Catholic biblical scholars as seen, for instance, in the annual meetings and journal of the Catholic Biblical Association in the United States?

Each of these approaches would be valuable. It seems to me, however, that the first step should be to ask what Scripture itself says about 'the Scriptures and their interpretation'. On the basis of this scriptural survey, this essay offers a rereading of *Dei Verbum*, which is certainly the most important recent exposition of Catholic understanding of our topic. Lastly, the essay explores some recent efforts to articulate why, given the advances made

possible by historical-critical methodology, there should still be a specifically Catholic way of interpreting the Scriptures.

Scripture on Scripture

When Scripture talks about ‘the Scriptures and their interpretation’, it does so consistently within liturgical and sanctifying contexts. The beginning of God’s written word takes place at Mount Sinai, when God calls Moses (and perhaps Aaron) to climb Mount (p. 43) Sinai to hear the ten commandments. When Moses draws near to ‘the thick darkness where God was’ (Exod. 20:21), God communicates to him a further set of ordinances. Moses then speaks God’s words to the children of Israel, who promise to obey God’s words. At this stage Scripture comes to be: ‘And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord’ (Exod 24:4). After writing the words, Moses builds an altar, offers sacrifice, sprinkles half of the sacrificial blood on the altar, reads ‘the book of the covenant’ aloud to the assembled people, and obtains their oath of obedience to God’s words, and sprinkles the other half of the blood on the people. The written words (Scripture) and the sacrificial renewal of the covenant belong together. The first liturgical reading of Scripture ends with an experience of intimate communion with God: ‘Then Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank’ (Exod. 24:9–11).

In the book of Exodus, however, Moses does not do all the writing. God calls him to ascend Mount Sinai and receive ‘the tables of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction’ (Exod. 24:12). When Moses goes up the mountain, God’s glory covers it for six days and on the seventh day, God calls Moses into his sabbath. The first thing that God teaches Moses is how the people are to worship. God commands Moses to build a tabernacle in accordance with the pattern that he shows him. After a lengthy discourse on the tabernacle, the priestly vestments, the sacrifices, and the sabbath, God hands Moses ‘the two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God’ (Exod. 31:18; see also Exod. 32:16). But those who worship the golden calf are given no access to God’s writing, whether graven in the two stone tablets or, as Moses says to God, in ‘your book which you have written’ (Exod. 32:32).

The ensuing account of God showing Moses his glory is linked with God rewriting the Decalogue on two stone tablets. God commands Moses, ‘Cut two tables of stone like the first; and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the first tables, which you broke. Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the mountain’ (Exod. 34:1). There God reveals his glory to Moses, who is holding in his hand the two tablets for God’s use. Moses then comes down the mountain with his face shining and with ‘the two tables of testimony in his hand’ (Exod. 34:29). Just as Moses the mediator reflects God’s glory, so also does God’s writing. Scripture reflects God’s glory and his ‘book’ of life (Exod. 32:32).

The liturgical place of Scripture is emphasized by the construction, parallel with the giving of the tablets of the law, of the ‘ark of the testimony’ (Exod. 39:35) to be kept in the ‘tabernacle of the testimony’ (Exod. 38:21). When the Israelites complete the building of the tabernacle, God’s glory fills it (Exod. 40:34–35), just as Moses had seen God’s glory when he approached God on Mount Sinai. The testimony of God (Scripture) finds its meaning within the context of the tabernacle and the priestly service of Aaron and his sons. Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy instructs the people to teach these words of God to their children and to meditate on them continuously. He urges the people to ‘bind them as a sign upon your hand’ and to ‘write them on the doorposts of your (p. 44) house and on your gates’ (Deut. 6:8–9; see also Deut. 11:18–20). The king himself must be guided by God’s words: ‘when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, from that which is in charge of the Levitical priests, and he shall read in it all the days of his life’ (Deut. 17:18). The book of the law will keep the king from becoming proud and will enable the king to follow God’s commandments so that both the king and the whole people will flourish. Moses writes the words of the law ‘in a book’ (Deut. 31:24) and hands it to the Levites for liturgical safekeeping in the ark.

But although the ark of the covenant remains a significant protagonist, the sacred writings fall out of sight—so much so that when King Josiah undertakes to repair the temple, his high priest, Hilkiah, discovers ‘the book of the law in the house of the Lord’ (2 Kgs. 22:8). Rather than reading the book himself, Hilkiah gives it to the scribe Shaphan, who reads the book and finds it important enough to read it aloud to Josiah.

The liturgical place of Scripture, which we noted in Moses’ experiences, stands out once again in Josiah’s reaction, generations later, to the rediscovery of the book of the law in the recesses of the temple (2 Kgs. 22:8). As with Moses descending from Mount Sinai to discover the golden calf, Josiah has discovered a liturgical failure of Israel far greater than he could have imagined when he began his efforts to renovate the temple. Not only had the sacred writings been lost for generations, but also the Passover of the Lord—in many ways the central liturgical feast—had not ‘been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, or during all the days of the kings of Israel or of the kings of Judah’ (2 Kgs. 23:22). Liturgical forgetfulness means scriptural ignorance and vice versa. Josiah implements a set of liturgical reforms aimed primarily at rooting out idolatry, and he renews the covenant with all Judah by reading aloud the Scripture to the whole people and leading the people in a covenantal oath ‘to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book’ (2 Kgs. 23:3).

After the destruction of the temple and the Babylonian exile, the returned exiles rebuild the temple and keep the Feast of Tabernacles and Passover. In this liturgical context, Ezra and the sacred writings enter into the story. Descended from Aaron, Ezra ‘set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel’ (Ezra 7:10). Ezra leads a large group of returning exiles, among whom are a number of priests bearing gifts for the temple. When he arrives in Jerusalem, he finds that the exiles who had returned earlier have assimilated, largely through intermarriage, with the surrounding peoples and their idolatrous cults. The sacred writings serve here to ensure

that the rebuilding of the temple and the liturgical celebrations are not for naught. After Nehemiah has rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, Ezra reads ‘the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel’ (Neh. 8:1) to the whole people. His assistants help the people understand the words of the law by explaining its meaning, ‘so that the people understood the reading’ (Neh. 8:8). On each day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Ezra reads ‘from the book of the law of God’ (Neh. 8:18). Ezra then leads the people in a renewal of covenant in which the people swear to obey God’s law and worship him faithfully in the temple.

(p. 45) From the above, we can appreciate why the psalmist proclaims that God’s words are ‘sweeter than honey to my mouth’ (Ps. 119:103). Scripture is never inert; it is read from within liturgical desire for union with the divine realities that it depicts. The biblical reader of Scripture is never far from the temple where God dwells: ‘One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple’ (Ps. 27:4). This inquiry, as an exercise in scriptural interpretation, is intrinsically liturgical.

What about the interpretation of Scripture depicted in the New Testament? Does it retain this liturgical context and dynamism? It does so, but in a new way, because Jesus performs, embodies, and fulfils the Scriptures. At the age of twelve, Jesus understands the law with a profundity that astounds the elders in the temple (Luke 2:46–47). At the outset of his ministry, Jesus proclaims the Scripture and applies it to himself: having read aloud Isa. 61:1–2 in the synagogue at Nazareth, he tells the congregation, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’ (Luke 4:21). At the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus presents himself as the fulfilment of Scripture’s promise of salvation: ‘If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water” ’ (John 7:37–38). After his resurrection, he shows the two disciples on the road to Emmaus that Scripture foretold the death and resurrection of the Messiah: ‘beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself’ (Luke 24:27). But the two disciples are only able to recognize him when he eucharistically breaks bread with them. The full meaning of the Scripture then becomes clear to them, in the light of the Eucharist. Soon afterwards the risen Jesus appears to the eleven disciples, and in a similar way he ‘opened their minds to understand the scriptures’ (Luke 24:45).

Both during his lifetime and after his resurrection, then, Jesus reads God’s words in liturgical contexts and proclaims himself to be the fulfilment of them. Jesus uses Scripture for the purpose of worshipping God and avoiding sin, as when he defends himself against Satan’s temptations by quoting God’s scriptural word. Scripture serves his life of holiness, by which he fulfils Scripture. Furthermore, by the authority of his teaching, Jesus generates more Scripture, namely the New Testament. His ‘blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many’ (Mark 14:24) reveals the Messiah to be the liturgical place where Israel’s relationship to God is ‘consummated’ (John 19:30). His body is the true temple (John 2:19–22). As the evangelist John comments: ‘he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said

this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken' (John 2:21–22).

In this formulation, Scripture is now twofold: 'the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken' (John 2:22). Worship in the body of Christ is nourished by the whole of Scripture and has its final eschatological consummation in view. Even now, as Jesus promises, 'If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him' (John 14:23).

Writing to Timothy, Paul warns against 'myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations rather than the divine training that is in faith' (1 Tim. 1:4; see also 1 (p. 46) Tim. 4:7), and he urges Timothy to 'attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching' (1 Tim. 4:13). Paul reminds Timothy that 'from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim. 3:15). These sacred writings have as their purpose our salvation. Paul attaches our 'desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim. 3:12) to the use that Timothy, and the community of believers, make of Scripture. Paul states, 'All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work' (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

Thus, far from being an inert text, Scripture is ordered to the accomplishment of sanctification. Its proper 'interpretation' occurs within an ecclesial and liturgical context, since the goal of biblical interpretation, as Scripture itself conceives it, is union with the living Lord.

Dei Verbum

Is this intrinsic relationship of Scripture to worship and sanctification reflected in Catholic understanding of the Scriptures and their interpretation today? This section of my essay argues in the affirmative, on the basis of the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*.

Dei Verbum begins by quoting 1 John 1:2–3, a call to share in eternal life in Christ: We 'proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ' (*DV* 1). This programmatic quotation signals the liturgical and sanctifying character of *Dei Verbum*'s understanding of Scripture and its interpretation.

Dei Verbum then offers some reflections about the fellowship of the Church, the liturgical body in which Scripture operates. God's care for the human race starts with the very first humans and continues through all times. In a particular way, God chooses Abraham and forms his descendants as the people of God by directing them, through Moses and the prophets, to worship him truly. He reveals his own life and shares it with us through

Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son who delivers us from sin and raises us to eternal life. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we are united in faith, hope, and love to God the Trinity. Once Christ has brought the fullness of revelation, the Holy Spirit ensures that the Church continues to deepen her understanding of revelation. The Church hands on the apostolic teaching through the successors of the apostles, the bishops who have the authority to interpret the word of God in the name of Christ. The apostolic teaching comes to us in sacred tradition and sacred Scripture, in such a manner that although Tradition and Scripture comprise 'one sacred deposit of the word of God' (*DV* 10), the Church's certitude about the content of revelation does not rest on Scripture alone.

(p. 47) This is the nature of the community that receives and interprets the sacred writings. *Dei Verbum* then explores the inspiration and interpretation of Scripture. First, it affirms that all the books of the Old and New Testament were composed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and have God as their author, although God works through human authors exercising fully human authorship. Scripture is inerrant because through its human affirmations God communicates the truth that he wishes to teach us. Second, the interpretation of Scripture requires careful attention to the intended meaning of the human writers, in light of the genres in which they wrote and the customs of their times. Third, interpretation of Scripture cannot proceed without attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in assuring the unity of the biblical books and in manifesting this unified meaning to the eyes of faith over the centuries of the Church's exegesis. Faith discerns the divine author who, as also in the incarnation of the Word, condescends to express himself through a fully human mode.

Immediately after the programmatic quotation from 1 John, the Dogmatic Constitution announces that its motivation is 'that the whole world may hear the message of salvation, and thus grow from hearing to faith, from faith to hope, and from hope to love' (*DV* 1). The entirety of *Dei Verbum*'s first chapter concerns God's abundant love. God 'wishes to give eternal life'; Christ 'revealed that God was with us, to deliver us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to eternal life'; the Holy Spirit 'moves the heart and converts it to God' (*DV* 3–5). The purpose of the word of God is to lead its hearers into the glory of the Trinity.

In the second chapter, similarly, we find that tradition and Scripture function as a mirror in which the Church 'contemplates God, from whom she receives everything, until such time as she is brought to see him face to face as he really is' (see John 3:2) (*DV* 7). The purpose of tradition and Scripture is to enable 'the People of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith' (*DV* 8). The ongoing enrichment of the Church's understanding of Scripture (and tradition) in the Church comes about through contemplative study whose model is Mary, as well as through believers' 'intimate sense of spiritual realities', and the bishops' authoritative teaching office (*DV* 8). In accord with the eschatological dynamism of Scripture and its interpretation, 'the Church is always advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth, until eventually the words of God are fulfilled in her' (*DV* 8). The Church's interpretation and performance of Scripture enact God's ongoing conversation 'with the spouse of his beloved Son' (*DV* 8). The work of interpreting

Scripture requires recognizing that it is through the Holy Spirit that 'the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the Church—and through her in the world', leading believers into the fullness of truth marked by the indwelling of the Word (*DV* 8). The reception of divine revelation must hold together fidelity 'to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and the prayers' (10; see also Acts 2:42). Outside this liturgical context ('the breaking of bread and the prayers'), the ecclesial 'brotherhood' could not apprehend 'the teaching of the apostles' as passed down in tradition and Scripture. For this reason the Church's Magisterium, guided by the Holy Spirit, has an intrinsic rather than extrinsic role in interpreting Scripture. The goal of this interpretation is 'the salvation of souls' (*DV* 10).

(p. 48) The third chapter of *Dei Verbum*, where we find the treatment of the inspiration and interpretation of Scripture, contains the same emphasis on the Holy Spirit's work 'for the sake of our salvation' (*DV* 11). Because the Holy Spirit works in history, what constitutes historical reality includes not simply the linear progression of moments but also transhistorical dimensions. Historical research should therefore also attend 'to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture, taking into account the tradition of the entire Church and the analogy of faith, if we are to derive their true meaning from the sacred texts' (*DV* 12). Just as Jesus cannot be recognized if he is thought to be merely a man, so also Scripture cannot be understood if it is treated simply as a set of ancient near-Eastern texts. In the Church, through the working of the Holy Spirit, Scripture shares in the incarnate Word's saving purpose.

The treatment of the Old and New Testaments in chapters four and five continues this approach to Scripture and its interpretation through a historical perspective shaped by a eucharistic and eschatological framework. Israel's sacred writings manifest 'sublime teaching on God and … sound wisdom on human life, as well as a wonderful treasury of prayers' (*DV* 15) and prophetic and typological expressions of the coming Messianic kingdom. Together with the Old Testament, the New Testament reveals 'the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith' (*DV* 17). As the incarnate Word, Christ reveals the Father, sends his Holy Spirit, and gives eternal life in his kingdom through his cross and resurrection. The four Gospels originate in the apostles' preaching and 'faithfully hand on what Jesus, the Son of God, while he lived among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation' (*DV* 19). After his ascension, the apostles, 'instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth' (*DV* 19), were able to understand him. We understand their writings when our minds, too, are enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

The final chapter of *Dei Verbum* makes fully explicit the understanding of Scripture and its interpretation that flows from the programmatic quotation of 1 John. The chapter begins:

> The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she venerated the Body of the Lord, in so far as she never ceases, particularly in the sacred liturgy, to par-

> take of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the Word of God and the Body of Christ.
>
> (*DV* 21)

This liturgical encounter with the Word of God underscores that the sacred writings have their full meaning within God's conversation with his people. The interpretation of Scripture should flow from what Scripture is. Explaining the nature of Scripture, *Dei Verbum* states, 'In the sacred books the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them' (*DV* 21). Interpretation cannot ultimately prescind from this conversation. The history portrayed in Scripture involves the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, and a fully historical interpretation of Scripture will recognize this.

Interpretation and performance go together, for Scripture is 'a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life' (*DV* 21). By the Holy Spirit, the Church learns to enter more deeply into (p. 49) the truth and charity of the incarnate Word. The purpose of interpretation is sanctification in truth: 'She [the Church] strives to reach day by day a more profound understanding of the sacred Scriptures, in order to provide her children with food from the divine words' (*DV* 23). This participatory engagement is how the Fathers of the Church and the sacred liturgies understood the task of interpretation, and so these sources continue to require study on the part of those who wish to understand Scripture, without thereby neglecting study of Scripture in its ancient near-Eastern contexts. Since the Word and Holy Spirit have entered history and are at the unifying centre of history, fully historical interpretation 'searches out, under the light of faith, the full truth stored up in the mystery of Christ' (*DV* 24). Priests and laity should undertake frequent reading of Scripture, not least in the liturgy, keeping in mind that 'prayer should accompany the reading of sacred Scripture, so that a dialogue takes place between God and man' (*DV* 25). The last sentence of *Dei Verbum* underscores the connection between participation in the liturgy and the interpretation of Scripture: 'Just as from constant attendance at the eucharistic mystery the life of the Church draws increase, so a new impulse of spiritual life may be expected from increased veneration of the Word of God, which 'stands forever' (Isa. 40:8; see also 1 Pet. 1:23–25)' (*DV* 26).

The Reception of *Dei Verbum*: Martin, Ratzinger, Farkasfalvy

How might Catholic exegetes and theologians today develop historically erudite interpretation of Scripture along the liturgical and sanctifying lines mapped by Scripture itself and by *Dei Verbum*? The biblical scholar Francis Martin credits his fifteen years in a Cistercian monastery with giving him the awareness that 'the native home of Scripture is the Liturgy' (Martin 2006: xii). The saving realities revealed in Scripture continue to be present today in a way that strictly time-bound realities could not be. Martin proposes thinking of history in terms of 'temporality' and thus of presence (Martin 2006: 239). He notes that modern historiography conceives of time solely as a succession of moments,

whereas Augustine argues, from a biblical perspective, that time is a participation in infinite presence: 'Temporality, the proper mode of creation's existence, is not just succession; it is succession with the dimension of presence' (Martin 2006: 240). When time is understood as 'temporality' in Augustine's biblical sense, the saving mystery can be seen to be intrinsic to the event that occurs in history.

What about historical-critical reconstructions that seek to move behind the biblical text in order to explore critically the text's possible historical referents? Martin finds these reconstructions to be valuable, so long as one recognizes that the biblical authors' narrative techniques are the means by which the Holy Spirit enables humans to interpret the actions of God in history. These narrative techniques disclose the mystery in the event, the way in which the temporal reality participates in God's infinite presence. (p. 50) Martin observes that it is this relationship between word and event that *Dei Verbum* describes as follows:

> This economy of Revelation is realized by deeds and words, which are intrinsically bound up with each other. As a result, the works performed by God in the history of salvation show forth and bear out the doctrine and realities signified by the words; the words, for their part, proclaim the works, and bring to light the mystery they contain.
>
> (*DV* 2)

On this view, historical-critical reconstructions can illumine the biblical text but cannot, if interpretation is to succeed, become a norm that displaces the biblical text. Historical reconstruction can set forth hypotheses about the temporal progression but cannot (unlike the inspired narrative) mediate understanding of temporality's presence to God. This is all the more the case when the temporal moment involves the Word incarnate, the Creator of all things who sustains all things by his presence and who guides all things by his providence, and whose actions thereby constitute the very centre of history (see Martin 2006: 272).

Another major contributor to the development of Catholic biblical exegesis in light of *Dei Verbum* is Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI). Ratzinger describes *Dei Verbum* as 'a decisive step forward' in terms of the relationship between theology and historical-critical method in Catholic biblical interpretation (Ratzinger 2007: xiv). With *Dei Verbum* 12, he argues for the necessity of the historical-critical method on the grounds that the historicity of God's saving work is a central claim of Christian faith. At the same time he notes that the historical-critical method, given its understanding of history as a succession of temporal moments with no metaphysical or providential relationship to God, must leave the history that it seeks to reconstruct strictly in the past. Although it can demonstrate the intra-biblical exegesis that relates the texts to each other, the historical-critical method cannot defend the unity of the diverse texts as one 'Bible'. In the ability of biblical words to be appropriated by later biblical authors, Ratzinger identifies an openness of the words themselves to a fulfilment or deeper value unknown to the original authors. This openness of the words corresponds to the openness of the community in which they were

written: the people of God journey forwards in faith, and the sacred writings live within this community of believers. The words have their full, trans-historical meaning within the presence of God to his people and of his people to God.

In an earlier essay, Ratzinger argues that the modern understanding of history as 'pure facticity, which is composed of chance and necessity' (Ratzinger 2008: 23) needs to be augmented by a metaphysical understanding of time as participating in God's eternity, with the resulting openness to providential teleology and to analogous relationships between past, present, and future events. Indebted to Thomas Aquinas, he finds that this understanding of history allows for God's action (above all God's action in Christ) to be recognizable as 'the principle of the intelligibility of history' (Ratzinger 2008: 24). Given this understanding of history, one can affirm in faith that 'the deeds that occurred in the Old Testament have their basis in a future deed' (Ratzinger 2008: 24). Among (p. 51) other things, this perspective unites word and event as participating in God's creative and providential work, and thus recovers the teleological unity of Scripture with Christ at the centre.

Indebted to Brevard Childs's canonical exegesis, Ratzinger envisions two phases of interpretation, the first of which seeks to understand the texts' ancient near-Eastern contexts, while the second locates the texts within 'the entire historical movement and in terms of the central event of Christ' (Ratzinger 2008: 25). Without openness to completion in the second phase, the first phase of interpretation can see only parts rather than the whole. The exegete of the Bible, which is a whole, does not therefore 'occupy a neutral position above or outside the history of the Church' (Ratzinger 2008: 29).

Another significant effort to develop the insights of *Dei Verbum* for contemporary Catholic biblical exegesis comes from Cistercian Denis Farkasfalvy. Citing Oscar Cullmann, he remarks that '[t]he literary heritage of the apostolic Church represented by the books of the New Testament is so closely and organically related to the Eucharist that one is entitled to state that all New Testament Scripture has a Eucharistic provenance' (Farkasfalvy 2010: 63, 75). The gospels were written and proclaimed within the context of early Christian worship, as believers assembled to hear about Jesus and to share in table fellowship with him through the breaking of bread. In this way, the encounters with Jesus depicted in the Gospels extend to the community of believers. Jesus is the one who comes and who is coming, not only to persons in his earthly life but now eucharistically to believers. Farkasfalvy also argues for the liturgical framework of the Book of Revelation, which he links with the resurrection appearances presented in the Gospel of John. The Book of Revelation confirms the New Testament's emphasis on 'the coming of God in the coming of Jesus, both complete and to be completed', an emphasis that locates interpretation of the texts within the eucharistic task of building up the Church in relationship to the Lord (Farkasfalvy 2010: 86).

I have given particular attention to the proposals of Martin, Ratzinger, and Farkasfalvy regarding history, presence, and the liturgical context of Scripture. Many other Catholic scholars could be cited in this regard. One thinks of Ignace de la Potterie's insistence that

the biblical writers themselves invited their readers into a transcendent mystery, not merely into a past event, as well as Luke Timothy Johnson's attempt to reunite *scientia* and *sapientia* by retrieving the key premises of patristic exegesis. Scott Hahn has strongly advocated 'the unity of scripture and liturgy' (Hahn 2005: 34) in a series of books and articles. The work of Albert Vanhoye combines an insistence on the eyes of faith with deep erudition regarding the ancient near-Eastern contexts. Others such as David Williams see untapped potential in the doctrine of dual authorship, which opens the literal sense 'to broad theological context without breaking the connection to historical circumstances' (Williams 2004: 178). Scholars such as R. R. Reno, Brian Daley, and Robert Louis Wilken have demonstrated the value of patristic exegesis, not in order to replicate it but in order to imitate its coordination of theology, liturgical sanctification, and multivalent exegesis. The Old Testament scholar Gary Anderson's magisterial research on sin, redemption, and merit has displayed the ability of historical-critical and literary work to generate and illumine theological insights.

(p. 52) As Luke Timothy Johnson observes, Catholic biblical scholars who came of age in the 1950s and 1960s often adopted 'uncritical acceptance of the dominant historical-critical paradigm' partly in reaction to the Catholic Church's suppression of historical-critical research earlier in the twentieth century (Johnson and Kurz 2002: 12). Yet these scholars also remained fully within an ecclesial context, as one sees in Joseph Fitzmyer's combination of the view that the historical-critical method is '*per se* neutral' with his faith that Scripture 'has been given by God for the edification and salvation of his people', and that 'it is properly expounded only in relation to the tradition that has grown out of it within the communal faith-life of that people' (Fitzmyer 2008: 69). Raymond Brown envisioned historical-critical scholarship as having a prophetic role 'in challenging Christians and the Church(es), much as the prophets challenged Israel, and Jesus challenged the people of his time' (Brown 1981: viii), with the goal of accomplishing 'needed reform, either by chopping away distracting accretions or by compensating for deficiencies' (Brown 1981: ix). Here Brown may have been overconfident in the ability of historical-critical scholarship to function prophetically. Writing only a quarter-century after Brown, Catholic biblical scholar John J. Collins argues that 'ethical principles, or theological truth, are not simply given by the Bible, regardless of whether one operates within a historical-critical or a postmodernist paradigm. The internal pluralism of the Bible, both theological and ethical, has been established beyond dispute' (Collins 2005: 160).

Like many Catholic biblical scholars today, Collins thinks that the way forwards for theology and ethics arising from Scripture will consist of 'a dialogue between the Bible as we understand it and whatever knowledge we may have from other sources' (Collins 2005: 161), while casting doubt on the normative character of either the self-contradictory biblical texts or the other sources. The academic enterprise of Catholic biblical scholarship has thus been tending to become 'academic' in the word's classical sense of scepticism, unable to offer the wider community any conclusions of truth other than the assurance of ambiguity. Insofar as this situation prevails, it hardly comports with *Dei Verbum*'s hope that exegetes would 'set about examining and explaining the sacred texts in such a way that as many as possible of those who are ministers of the divine Word may be able to dis-

tribute fruitfully the nourishment of the Scriptures of the People of God' (*DV* 23). Even so, this situation may be an improvement over the notion that the assured results of biblical scholarship stand over against the community in a way comparable to Jesus' challenge to the Pharisees.

I have suggested that Scripture and *Dei Verbum* provide a better path forwards for Catholic understanding of Scripture and its interpretation, by emphasizing the liturgical and sanctifying context of God's word. Among contemporary expositors, I highlighted Martin, Ratzinger, and Farkasfalvy on the grounds that their efforts to develop a more 'critical' understanding of temporality in relation to God, and to uncover the liturgical context of Scripture, open new space for a biblical interpretation that is historically erudite and distinctly Catholic. It will be evident that their approaches (such as *Dei Verbum*) owe a large debt to the great *Ressourcement* thinkers of the past century, to whom Catholic interpreters of Scripture will continue to look for guidance.

(p. 53) In this regard, the influence of Maurice Blondel's debate with Albert Loisy is particularly significant. Blondel emphasizes that historians cannot see 'the spiritual reality, the activity of which is not wholly represented or exhausted by the historical phenomena' (Blondel 1994: 237). Blondel stimulated Henri de Lubac's rich studies of patristic and medieval exegesis, which display de Lubac's awareness that '[s]piritual interpretation' both 'is, in an eminent way, historical interpretation' and 'must not imprudently or prematurely interfere with historical study' (de Lubac 2000: 28). Here is also the place to mention Jean Daniélou's uncovering of the biblical symbolism underlying the Church's sacramental liturgies and his recognition that the engagement of Christianity with the modern world turns on competing 'philosophies of history', materialist and sacramental (Daniélou 1958: 80). Finally, I would point to Yves Congar's studies of the relationship of Tradition and Scripture, in which Congar agrees with the patristic understanding that '[t]he Scriptures do not surrender their meaning by the bare text; they surrender it to a mind that is living, and living in the conditions of the Covenant,' that is, in the context of Tradition (Congar 2004: 91).

Conclusion

The Protestant exegete Kavin Rowe has called for rethinking the ways that Scripture and theology are taught in doctoral programmes at Christian institutions, in order to avoid as much as possible the separation of biblical scholarship from other theological disciplines. In the Catholic world, pontifical degree programmes have sought to accomplish this same objective: those who earn pontifical doctorates in sacred Scripture also possess significant graduate training in theology. Francis Martin once joked that after finishing his theological and philosophical training, gaining proficiency in biblical languages, and developing a serviceable grasp of the secondary literature, he found himself ready to begin just when his contemporaries were contemplating retirement. A lifetime does not suffice for the task. Nor should we expect it to do so, since as *Dei Verbum* says, the interpretation of Scripture in the Church is one of the ways that God 'continues to converse with the

spouse of his beloved Son' (*DV* 8). To read Scripture in its liturgical and sanctifying context, in accord with the experience of God's presence in history, is to recognize just how true is the Gospel of John's testimony that 'there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written' (Jn 21:25).

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Faith and Reason

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Abstract and Keywords

After considering the mutual implication of faith and reason in John Paul II's Fides et ratio this chapter considers the concept of revelation, emphasizing ways in which revelation is both open and not open to human reason. The chapter then explores different models of faith and reason that have emerged through the history of Christianity, showing that conceptions of reason are defined by conceptions of faith, and that concepts of faith are defined by the concept of revelation. Throughout, the chapter also argues that a radical notion of divine self-revelation underlies Christian thought, and is accompanied by a radical notion of faith that involves not only intellectual assent but the commitment of the whole person, and a radical notion of reason that recognizes its end in that which transcends reason.

Keywords: faith, reason, revelation, truth, Benedict XVI, transcendence

The Circle of Faith and Reason

ACCORDING to Pope John Paul II in his 1998 encyclical *Fides et ratio* ('Faith and Reason'), 'the relationship between theology and philosophy is best construed as a circle. Theology's source and starting point must always be the word of God revealed in history, while its final goal will be an understanding of that word which increases with each passing generation' (*Fides et ratio* 73). The relationship between faith and reason can similarly be compared to a circle. Their relationship could be defined then as continuous, mutual, and permanent. Wherever in this circle we begin with faith, we arrive at a certain understanding of faith, that is, we arrive at reason; and wherever we begin with reason, we arrive eventually at faith. This continuity between faith and reason entails a permanent interaction; there is no kind of faith that does not involve some kind of reason, and there is no kind of reason that does not involve some kind of faith.

The metaphor of the circle is useful in a further sense. In their circular movement both faith and reason change; they change not only in the individual understanding of a person who attempts to conceive their relationship. In the life of the Christian community there

has also been a development in which faith becomes increasingly reflected and articulated by understanding. Faith cannot become fully rational and nor can reason change entirely into faith; they remain what they are yet their peculiar nature and their proper relationship has been better conceived as their interaction has developed. On the historical scale, as John Paul II indicates, there is a growth in understanding 'with each passing generation'; and one can add that there is also growth in faith in the same historical process. From the beginning of Christianity we witness a fruitful relationship between faith and reason in such a way that faith becomes in a sense ever more faithful, and reason, influenced by the changes of faith, becomes more reasonable.

(p. 56) Today we consider faith not only as an act of the human mind in which it accepts divine revelation, but as an act of human persons in which they give themselves unconditionally to divine-human encounter. And thus reason is no longer the '*ratio*' of the Romans or the '*dianoia*' of the Greeks, but a radical understanding of human finiteness facing the other and freely constituting a community with it. Just as the modern and contemporary forms of faith, especially faith as an ultimate personal act, can be termed *radical*, we can similarly term radical the reason that gradually departed from the cosmo-theological categories of the ancients and has acquired a richer understanding of its total relationship to the ultimate source of all. Radical faith and radical reason form again a circle in which human persons become able to realize their personhood in the divine-human encounter.

In this circle, there is a centre around which faith and reason revolve: divine revelation. Revelation, however, is historical: 'God's Revelation is […] immersed in time and history' (*Fides et ratio* 11). This means that revelation is a historical process which makes possible the development of faith and reason and their relationship. 'In Christianity time has a fundamental importance', as John Paul II writes in the same document, so that revelation 'introduces into our history a universal and ultimate truth which stirs the human mind to ceaseless effort; indeed, it impels reason continually to extend the range of its knowledge until it senses that it has done all in its power, leaving no stone unturned' (*Fides et ratio* 14).

Methodologically, reflection on the relationship between faith and reason belongs to reason. This reflecting reason cannot be satisfied with considering faith formally or externally; it must possess the experience of faith and reflect on it faithfully. This reason is not identical with the traditional notion of the human mind searching for faith (*intellectus quaerens fidem*), because in order to reflect on the circle of faith and reason we need to be already in this circle. On the other hand, this intellectual endeavour is not identical with 'faith seeking understanding' (*fides quaerens intellectum*) either, because as soon as we find ourselves in this circle, our position cannot be assigned permanently to any phase of this circle. In the circle, faith is dynamically connected to reason, and reason is continuously saturated by faith. We may term the circular movement of faith and reason, which we recognize by reflecting on their relationship, radical reflection. It is radical inasmuch as it strives to understand a relationship, in which it belongs, as an ultimate whole. What reason can do in this situation is not to leave the circle of the interactions of faith and reason but to become involved in their circular movement and their connection. It can un-

derstand the origin of this movement, the historical and logical roots, hence this is an achievement of radical reason; and it can search for further possibilities of this circular development in which faith and reason open themselves to further possibilities of their relationship.

I will explore these questions by considering, first, different models of revelation. On this basis I will then examine in more detail different visions of faith itself and, finally, developments in our understanding of reason.

(p. 57) Models of Revelation

By speaking of models, we presuppose two things: first, there is a variety of actual and possible models; second, these models do not exhaust the reality which they express. This is even more so with respect to the fact of revelation: the models of revelation offer some help to understand the historical and ontological richness of revelation. Yet no model is capable of conveying revelation in its totality and no understanding is able to grasp its full reality. At the same time, there are models that represent a deeper understanding of the reality we are considering, and there are others that grasp only some external aspects of that reality. The notion of a model, applied to revelation, faith, and reason, is thus a useful methodological tool.

According to Avery Dulles, revelation can be conceived in five different models. These models are the propositional (revelation as a doctrine), the historical (revelation as history), the experiential (revelation as an inner experience), the dialectical (revelation as the totally different), and the consciousness model (forms of a new awareness). Dulles develops a careful assessment of these models, which may be seen as the sixth model of revelation, the model of symbolic communication (Dulles 1992: 131 ff).

Dulles offers these models of revelation both as a series of historically evolving forms and as ontological moments of ‘divine revelation’ understood as a whole. The propositional model appears to be the first systematic model characteristic of medieval and modern scholasticism; the historical model emerges with the Protestant emphasis on history. The model of experience was suggested by nineteenth-century philosophers and their modernist followers; and the dialectical model, with the towering figure of Karl Barth as its main representative, was born out of a reaction to the experiential model. The model of consciousness can be understood rationalistically; however, transcendental approaches to revelation, which emphasize both the human element and the non-reducible divine component, belong to the same model. Finally, the model of symbolic communication is open to the merits of all models and offers a rational means to approach the mystery of divine revelation. By emphasizing the historical development of such forms, Dulles suggests that it is in history that divine revelation is disclosed in a more complex fashion.

It is important to see that the problem of divine revelation was not clearly addressed as an independent problem in theology and philosophy before the rise of modernity (Baillie 1956; Latourelle 1967; Ward 1995). The *content* of revelation has been considered central

from the beginnings of Christianity, as the Gospels describe the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as God's special revelation in His Son. Yet only with the emergence of rationalism, which investigated the relationship between natural and supernatural revelation, did theologians and philosophers articulate the notion of revelation as a distinct set of questions and problems. When the cosmo-theological view of the universe was predominant, the specific problem of revelation could not be raised meaningfully; for virtually all traditions the universe was seen in such a way that 'revelation' in it was (p. 58) naturally possible. Accordingly, the central message of the Tanakh was the distinction between genuine and non-genuine revelation. The novelty of Christianity did not consist in its simple offering of 'revelation' but in offering the ultimate revelation of the true and one God incarnated in the real person of Jesus Christ. Thus the authors of the New Testament writings, especially the Apostle Paul, took it for granted that revelation was possible; their *kerugma* was the content of the genuine revelation for which they testified.

Concerning the question of what revelation is, philosophers and theologians have influenced each other. Philosophy not only prompted theological developments but also contributed to the emergence of a new notion of revelation. Moreover, Catholic theology was driven to formulate its position gradually, beginning with its reaction to the Protestant Reformation. This debate can be summarized in two propositions. Protestant theologians, beginning with Luther, insisted on the interior character of revelation and denied the importance of the real or incarnate aspects of it. Catholic theologians, on the contrary, insisted on the importance of the external aspects of revelation, such as the visible Church, the Scriptures and tradition, along with the doctrines, as the essence of revelation offered for the intellectual assent of the believer. Catholics never denied the interior aspect of revelation, but refused to overemphasize it; by this tactic, however, many of them came to stress one-sidedly the extrinsic dimension of revelation. In this debate, Catholic theology came to support the following aspects of revelation: revelation is *mediate* as opposed to the claims of various Protestant movements; revelation can be *sufficiently understood* by studying the sources of revelation; revelation is *word-like*—it is a spoken and written doctrine presented by the Church, and verified by her authority, for the assent of the believer.

In spite of attempts during the early nineteenth century to find a more elaborate and less formal position, Catholic theology kept emphasizing the importance of doctrinal revelation. The unity of divine revelation is given precisely in the unity of the visible Church and in the person of the pope who, in well-defined cases, acts as the 'shepherd and teacher of all Christians' (*Pastor aeternus* 4). This is the foundation of the doctrine of papal infallibility, a dogma proclaimed at the First Vatican Council in 1870. However, the externalist understanding of revelation was softened by some authors of the same period. For Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835–88), revelation is not merely the word of God, but also involves the inner preparation of the soul to receive revelation. It is not merely tradition, but also the historical dynamism of tradition; it is not only the doctrinal teaching of the magisterium, but also the contemplation of God; and revelation is not merely word, but also deed, God's historical presence in the life of the Church. The history of revelation embodies a

trajectory which begins in paradise and ends in the beatific vision (Scheeben 1946: 357–430).

The two decisive documents issued by the Church on the nature of revelation are *Dei Filius* (1870) at Vatican I and *Dei Verbum* (1965) at Vatican II. Both documents confirm that God can be known with certainty from the creation by the light of human reason (*Dei Filius,* 2; *Dei Verbum* 6). They also confirm that the core of revelation exceeds the human mind. For both, revelation is that which God discloses in his Son as the means of (p. 59) human salvation. And yet, the two documents differ in emphasis at this point: *Dei Filius* speaks of the 'supernatural' end of human beings, the sharing of 'divine blessings' (*Dei Filius* 3–4), while *Dei Verbum* emphasizes rather our 'share of divine nature', human beings as 'friends' of God (*Dei Verbum* 2). *Dei Verbum* avoids the expression 'supernatural' and displays a more cautious and historical understanding of the relationship between reason and revelation. Both documents emphasize the importance of the traditions of the Church, but *Dei Verbum* puts an emphasis on 'Sacred Scripture, its inspiration and divine interpretation' (*Dei Verbum* 3). *Dei Verbum* uses the expression, introduced by *Dei Filius,* of God's 'self-revelation': 'Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men' (*Dei Verbum* 6). In *Dei Filius,* we find the simpler formula of *se ipsum revelare*—'to reveal himself'—which can be seen as a consequence of the notion of 'self-revelation' ('*Selbstoffenbarung*') worked out by German philosophers at the beginning of the nineteenth century and maintained even today (*Dei Filius* 2; see also Benedict XVI 2013) It is of central importance that *Dei Verbum* speaks of 'the history of salvation', an expression missing in *Dei Filius.* In this perspective, history appears to be more important than a hierarchical ontology of natural and supernatural orders.

Dei Verbum offers an approach to the notion of revelation closer to the historical model of Dulles. The emphasis on the absolute transcendence of divine revelation in *Dei Verbum* compensates for the rational tenor of *Dei Filius*:

> It is to be ascribed to this divine revelation, that such truths among things divine as of themselves are not beyond human reason, can, even in the present condition of mankind, be known by everyone with facility, with firm assurance, and with no admixture of error
>
> (*Dei Filius* 2).

According to John Paul II, the sharp distinction between the natural and the supernatural realms in *Dei Filius* was a reaction to immanentist philosophies of the nineteenth century; the Second Vatican Council emphasized the rights of human reason as well as 'a knowledge which is peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason, which nevertheless by its nature can discover the Creator' (*Fides et ratio* 8). The historical dimension, 'the salvific character of God's Revelation in history' (*Fides et ratio* 10) is more forcefully displayed: 'History […] becomes the arena where we see what God does for humanity. God comes to us in the things we know best and can verify most easily, the things of our everyday life, apart from which we cannot understand ourselves' (*Fides et*

ratio 12). This is consonant with the notion of progress in understanding revelation: ‘As the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly progresses towards the fullness of divine truth, until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her’ (*Fides et ratio* 11).

Beyond these models and their interpretations we face God’s revelation in its original entirety, that is, radical revelation. Radical revelation is God’s unrestricted self-revelation as realized in the drama of divine-human encounter on all levels of personal lives, societies, cultural epochs, and historical trajectories. There is no way to escape (p. 60) God’s radical revelation as it is given for all human persons in their intrinsic personhood which is open to the fully other. Normally, we face God’s self-revelation ‘as in a glass darkly’ (2 Cor. 3:18). However, as soon as we begin to learn how to perceive God’s presence in the universe, in history, in the Scriptures, and the liturgy, or in the lives of human persons, we become increasingly open to the ultimate fact of God’s radical revelation. There are different models of revelation *because* there is the fundamental fact of revelation at the root of every model (Mezei 2013: 94 ff). It is not a *model* of revelation that is in the centre of the circle of faith and reason, it is the *reality* of God’s revelation, direct, full, and absolute, which stands in the centre. By faith and reason, we respond to this fact either indirectly, as in an analysis of models and their faith components, or directly in a personal decision to open ourselves (‘unmask’, ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ, 2 Cor. 3:18) to the mysterious reality of God.

In *Dei Filius, Verbum Dei*, and in *Fides et ratio* while divine revelation is God’s revelation of himself, it is a revelation directed to faith as well as to reason in different ways. Revelation is directed to faith inasmuch as there are mysteries unique to revelation that cannot be conceived by reason and are open merely to faith. There are, nevertheless, contents of revelation that are open to reason either in the natural sense or in the sense of a rational reflection of faith. Revelation as a centre has thus two sides: one cannot be approached by the human mind, but the other *is* open to the human mind. The side that is unapproachable for the human mind necessitates a different capacity, faith—the next important target in a reflection on the relationship between faith and reason.

The Character of Faith

‘Faith permits us to look at the “sun”, God, because it is the acceptance of his revelation in history and, so to speak, the true reception of God’s mystery, recognizing the great miracle’ (Benedict XVI 2012b). These words of Pope Benedict reflect a complex notion of faith; during the ‘Year of Faith’ (2012–13) Benedict offered a series of catecheses. He claims:

> Faith, in fact, is an encounter with God who speaks and works in history and converts our daily life, transforming within us mentalities, value judgements, decisions, and practical actions. Faith is not an illusion, a flight of fancy, a refuge or

> sentimentalism; rather it is total involvement in the whole of life and is the proclamation of the Gospel, the Good News that can set the whole of the person free
>
> (Benedict XVI 2012a).

Or again: ‘Having faith in the Lord is not something that solely involves our intelligence, the area of intellectual knowledge; rather, it is a change that involves our life, our whole self: feelings, heart, intelligence, will, corporeity, emotions and human relationships’ (Benedict XVI 2012).

(p. 61) In these approaches, Benedict highlights the complex nature of faith. While he quotes the traditional understanding of faith as ‘an intellectual virtue’, he puts an emphasis on the holistic interpretation of faith as ‘a total involvement’, which differs from narrower notions of faith, such as the merely intellectual-volitional one. In *Spe salvi*, Benedict revisits the biblical source of the notion of faith defined in the Letter to the Hebrews (11:1) and offers an analysis pointing to the nature of faith as reality (ὑπόστασις) and evidence (ἔλεγχος). Benedict underlines the objective and real character of faith which makes it impossible to understand faith merely as an interior attitude, as for instance Luther did; faith is a power that encompasses the entire human person *(Spe salvi* 7).

With respect to faith, we can find various understandings throughout history. Again, we can identify a number of models. According to the biblical model, faith is a strong conviction of a certain state of affairs not directly given to the human mind. A fundamental expression of this conviction is the phrase Jesus used so often that it was recorded in the Greek text of the Gospels in its original Hebrew form: ‘Amen’ expresses absolute trust and confidence that a thing necessarily, on the basis of the power of a higher order, comes to pass. The Septuagint translates it as γένοιτο, ‘so be it’. The Latin translation is *fiat*. In each case, the unwavering personal conviction is based on a powerful order of things originating in God.

The second model is the Aristotelian–Thomistic one. According to Benedict, ‘Saint Thomas Aquinas, using the terminology of the philosophical tradition to which he belonged, explains it as follows: faith is a *habitus*, that is, a stable disposition of the spirit, through which eternal life takes root in us and reason is led to consent to what it does not see’ *(Spe salvi* 7). Faith is one of the theological virtues; this virtue, according to St Thomas, belongs to the intellect and the will:

> For the state of the believer, as has been said above, is such that the intellect is determined to something through the will, and the will does nothing except in so far as it is moved by its object, which is the good to be sought for and its end. In view of this, faith needs a twofold principle, a first which is the good that moves the will, and a second which is that to which the understanding gives assent under the influence of the will
>
> (*De verit*. q.14, a.2).

In this paragraph Thomas offers a peculiar synthesis of the biblical definition of faith, the Church traditions, and the view based on the Aristotelian ethics of virtues.

A third model conceives faith as primarily an act of the human subject. According to Luther:

> Faith is a living, bold trust in God's grace, so certain of God's favour that it would risk death a thousand times trusting in it. Such confidence and knowledge of God's grace makes you happy, joyful, and bold in your relationship to God and all creatures'
>
> (Luther 1854: 124–125).

(p. 62) Calvin similarly emphasizes the human subject:

> Now we shall have a proper definition of faith if we say it is a steady and certain knowledge of the divine benevolence toward us, which being founded upon the truth of the gratuitous promise in Christ is both revealed to our minds and sealed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit'
>
> (Calvin, *Institutes* III. 2. 7; Calvin 1989: 475).

There was a focus on human individuals as believers even in earlier models of faith, which is witnessed by several passages in the Gospels. However, the human subject does not come to the fore emphatically before the rise of Protestantism. This development instigated a historical process in Catholic as well as Protestant Christianity in which the importance of human persons became ever more central.

The fourth model is the emotional, which originates in Christian mysticism. The central position of feeling (*Gefühl*) was proclaimed by Goethe in an influential way: 'Feeling is all in all: The Name is sound and smoke' (Goethe 2005: 120). Faith as the fundamental feeling of 'absolute dependence' was defined and explained by Schleiermacher. Here the traditional understanding of faith as 'reality' and 'evidence' gives way to the model of emotional experience, in which 'feeling' appears as a separate faculty of human beings to perceive God:

> The common element … in all expressions of piety … or, in other words, the self-identical essence of piety, is this: the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God'
>
> (Schleiermacher 1999: 12).

This consciousness is both the core of human self-consciousness and the fundamental experience of human persons (Schleiermacher 1999: 12–18). Faith appears as the basic act of human beings. A clear opposition between the emotional model and the Aristotelian–Thomistic model became apparent during the anti-modernist debates. In the 'Anti-Modernist Oath', included in his *Motu Proprio* (a document issued personally by a pope, usually establishing an institution or making changes to ecclesiastical law or procedure) *Sacro-*

rum antitistum, Pope Pius X condemns understandings of faith based on sentiment as opposed to the work of the intellect and will.

The fifth model of faith is the rational one, the most important representative of which is Kant: 'Adopting the principles of a religion is called faith κατ' ἐξοχήν […] ("fides sacra")'. As to the meaning of 'adopting', Kant distinguishes between two kinds: 'pure rational faith' and 'revealed faith' (Kant 1996: 184 ff). Pure rational faith is universally accessible for all rational beings, while revealed faith is commanded by an authority. Kant emphasizes the difference between these two kinds: the one is open to human reason, the other requires 'a salto mortale of human understanding'. Kant goes even so far as to offer a classification of 'artificial belief'; it is, however, more important for him to point out the reason why a reform of Christianity is needed. In Christianity, for Kant, the two kinds of faith are confused and the genuine kind, rational faith, cannot be expounded (p. 63) adequately. It follows that the task of philosophy, in Kant's sense, is to explain the nature of pure faith:

> The only faith that can found a universal church is *pure religious faith*, for it is a plain rational faith which can be convincingly communicated to everyone, whereas a historical faith, merely based on facts, can extend its influence no further than the tidings relevant to a judgment on its credibility can reach'
>
> (Kant 1996: 136–137).

The rationality of faith is given in its universal validity; this universality is of the a priori kind which can be discovered by transcendental reasoning. Rational faith is moral faith, for it rejects the superstitions of the historical faith and has only one aim: right moral conduct under the spell of the categorical imperative with respect to the moral principle.

As to the existential model of faith, we can think of two types: the first emphasizes faith without certainty, or blind faith. The other type conceives faith as a human person's self-donation to God on the basis of an experience overwhelming human persons and arousing in them the awareness of their belonging to God. Kierkegaard's interpretation of faith is of the first kind. He introduced such important expressions as 'the leap to faith', 'the knight of faith', or the 'paradox' as describing a practice of faith in sheer opposition to then current notions of faith as certainty. Kierkegaard borrowed Jacobi's expression of '*salto mortale*' (the 'dangerous leap'), which Kant used in a pejorative sense, but for Kierkegaard *salto mortale* is the central feature of 'the leap of faith'. As Kierkegaard's interpretation of the '*akedah*', the Binding of Isaac, shows, the knight of faith acts blindly, without certainty, yet paradoxically trusting the ultimate power of God. We are called to face a paradoxical God and have:

> to put our faith into Him so that we reach a place where rest may be found for your weary head, your weary thoughts, your weary spirit, so that you might find rest and find complete repose: Oh, in the changelessness of God there is rest!
>
> (Kierkegaard 1941: 237 ff).

As to the second kind of existential faith, Pascal may have been the first to formulate a notion of faith that involves the human self in its essence, a person's 'heart'. As Pascal famously noted, 'The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know' (Pascal 1958: 277). 'It is the heart which experiences God, and not reason. This, then, is faith: God felt by the heart, not by reason' (Pascal 1958: 278). Later developments of existential faith, such as in Scheler, Marcel, or Walther, show that there have been philosophers whose God was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Walther 1976: 142; Marcel 2001 II, 68; Scheler 2010: 246). This kind of existential faith is expressed in the words of Benedict XVI:

> Having faith in the Lord is not something that solely involves our intelligence, the area of intellectual knowledge; rather, it is a change that involves our life, our whole self: feelings, heart, intelligence, will, corporeity, emotions, and human relationships'
>
> (Benedict XVI 2012).

(p. 64) The seventh model of faith could be called 'philosophical faith'. For Karl Jaspers, 'philosophical faith' is a transcendental openness to the absolute on the basis of a hermeneutics of the ciphers of the human situation. Faith is not knowledge which I possess, but certainty which directs me. In faith, there is a unity of the subject and the object of faith; we live in and from faith. Faith is power, by the possession of which I am certain of a ground, which I am able to preserve but cannot produce. At the same time, it pertains to faith that I need to *think* about faith; and thus faith and reason belong organically together. However, philosophical faith renounces a belief in positive revelation so that it can freely read the ciphers of reality in a human community, which lives in the awareness of the distance from the transcendent other (See Jaspers 1967: 15–17).

These models, just as the models of revelation, are ontological moments of a whole and they disclose a historical trajectory. The explicit awareness of faith as the 'total involvement in the whole of life' emerges only gradually. Whereas already the biblical notion points to faith as 'total involvement', we needed time to go through various forms of faith to arrive at a more dramatic experience and a fuller understanding. As John Paul II comments on *Dei Verbum*:

> […] the Church has always considered the act of entrusting oneself to God to be a moment of fundamental decision which engages the whole person. In that act, the intellect and the will display their spiritual nature, enabling the subject to act in a way which realizes personal freedom to the full
>
> (*Fides et ratio* 13).

Faith is a necessity, which does not contradict freedom; and faith exists on a historical scale, which does not contradict its original richness.

Our notion of faith may be further enlarged. I refer especially to the experience of Jews, described by survivors of Auschwitz, who were able to persist amidst the monstrosity of historic evil so that they put their whole existence—past, present, and future—into the hand of a God whom they could not identify any more as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were not able to understand the evil many of them did not survive, yet they began to experience a silent encouragement to cry out to God and plead for help. They did not know whether they would survive the next hour or day; they did not know if God changed or remained the same; they could not judge if God betrayed his people or remained faithful; for they could not understand what was happening to the Chosen People and could not see its reasons. Yet they kept praying, even arguing like Job, and became responsive to a mysterious support which proved to be stronger than anything a human being could offer. This faith I call *radical.* Radical faith is at the root of all models of faith; radical faith is about giving our life; radical faith is ultimate, it is not even paradoxical; radical faith is an absolute. It is about putting our whole existence and the existence of the world into the hand of God, the source of radical revelation (for further discussion see Mezei 2013: 3 ff).

(p. 65) In all these cases, nevertheless, faith is initiated by the object of faith, God, in such a way that its character as a gift remains intact while it activates, maintains, and permeates all human acts of faith.

The Development of Reason

Reason's historical evolution is even more evident. Just think of the stimulating use of 'reason' in some verses of the Bible, such as Job 13:3: 'Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God'. Here the verb 'to reason' (יָכַח) has the meaning 'to argue, to dispute'. The Vulgate uses '*disputare*', while the Septuagint translates it with ἐλέγξω, which is based on ἔλεγχος, 'evidence,' such as in Heb. 11:1. Job wants to have an argument with God, *because* he has faith in God. Faith can indeed become a reasonable argument, based on evidence, which leads to a catharsis; it seems that already in the Bible such an understanding of faith is present. In Isa. 1:18 we read a prophetic utterance in which God invites the believer to a discussion: 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool'. In this verse, 'to reason' (יָכַח) refers again to a face-to-face argument with God, as the crucial part of the divine-human relationship.

'Reason' has a rich history beginning with the Platonic '*theoria*' (θεωρία) through Kant's pure reason ('*reine Vernunft*') to the transcendental consciousness of Edmund Husserl; and to the various conceptions of reason in the works of Jürgen Habermas or Charles Taylor. In this development, several aspects of the human mind come to the fore and instead of a process of unification we find rather a process of dramatic diversification. Here again to speak of models of reason can give us some clarity. The three basic models we can detect in this history are *contemplative reason* (Plato and his followers), *constructive reason*

(starting with Aristotle but developing rapidly with Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, and the latter's adherents), and *transcendental reason* (Kant and modern German philosophy). These models of reason do not strictly correspond to the models of revelation I outlined earlier. Yet in general a certain parallelism can be found between notions of reason and notions of revelation, a parallelism that culminates in the understanding that revelation always requires the corresponding faculty of a human being, and thus radical revelation requires the radical openness of human persons and their reason.

Contemplative reason is so called because of the central importance of θεωρία, which Plato attributed to the human mind as its highest function. '*Theoria*' in Plato as well as in Hellenistic thought is the mind's contemplation of nature, especially the sky, so that the assimilation of humans to the divine can be realized. The Latin '*contemplatio*' originally expressed the ecstatic attitude of perceiving divine signs, especially the flight of birds (Festugière 1967: 245). For Plato, '*theoria*' is the contemplation of the ideas in the mirror (p. 66) of the heavens: 'God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in heavens, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence' (*Timaeus* 47b–c; Plato 1987: 1175). Contemplative reason determined the early Christian understanding of the mind as is reflected in Bonaventure's '*contuitio*' in which one contemplates the eternal truths of God and become unified with God himself; and even for Thomas Aquinas, 'When men's thoughts are principally directed towards the contemplation of the truth, their life is said to be contemplative' (*ST* II–II, q.180, a.1).

However, already with Thomas, fundamental changes occur in the notion of the human mind. At the root of these changes we find Aristotle's distinction between the active and the passive intellect; while for Aristotle, the 'passive intellect' (νοῦς παθητικός) 'is becoming all things', still the 'active intellect' (νοῦς θεωρητικός) 'forms all things, in the way an active condition like light too makes the colors that are in potency be at work as colours' (Aristotle, *De anima,* III, 5, 430a10–25; Aristotle 1984: 684). The active intellect is separate and it is questionable whether it belongs to human beings or simply to God alone. Aristotle, nevertheless, stresses the importance of 'practical wisdom' (φρόνησις, Aristotle, *NE* VI; Aristotle 1984: 1797 ff) as the central faculty of human beings. Thomas Aquinas not only unified the various conceptions of reason into a common faculty of individual human beings, he stresses the importance of will (*ST* II–II, q.6, a.1), and organically connects human reasoning as 'advancing from one thing to another' with human intellect as 'something at rest', i. e. insight. (*ST* I, q.79, a.8).

Reason becomes principally bound to external sense experience in Thomas, from which it follows that contemplative reason is banished to mysticism. Sensually bound reason is understood increasingly not only as the faculty of forming sense data but also the world in the accomplished circle of the '*reditio completa*'. Centuries before Marx's dictum ('the philosophers have only interpreted the world, the point is to change it', Marx 1998: 574), reason had been understood as constructive, such as in Descartes's '*more geometrico*' reasoning. Mechanical reason, the crudest variant of constructive reason, is focused on the production of isolated copies of natural goings-on in the form of physical, biological,

social, and mental machines. In some cases, mechanical reason becomes political, and the machine such a reason builds is a mechanistic society.

The emerging awareness of the a priori dimension of reason effected a development principally different from the perspective of constructive reason. Leibniz famously reformulated Aquinas's maxim *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu* (there is nothing in the mind which was not before in the senses), by adding *nisi intellectus ipse* (except the mind itself) (Leibniz 1981: 111). Human reason has a dimension distinct from its relation to sense experience, an autonomous sphere determining individual reasoning. This dimension is termed 'a priori' or 'transcendental' by Kant, or 'substantive reason' by David Walsh, in which 'reason itself has become the focus of reason' (Walsh 2008, 3, 24). Self-focusing reason is fundamentally different from a reason related to the external world as its basic feature, since the latter proves to be merely an aspect of an encompassing whole which deserves even a different name, '*Vernunft*'. Transcendental reason, as delineated in the post-Kantian developments, signifies an important change in the history of reason: being in its core discloses itself in the fact of transcendental (p. 67) reason. With the emergence of transcendental reason, a new dimension of the classical notion of reason appeared.

What comes after the variations of the transcendental model is transcending this model in Heidegger's ontology of being and existence, or in the criticisms of Heideggerian ontology by such authors as Emmanuel Lévinas. The naturalistic reactions to Husserl and Heidegger in the works of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty could not counterbalance a paramount philosophical breakthrough. And it was Lévinas who recognized that Heidegger's ontology can be successfully criticized only from the point of view of absolute otherness. In this criticism, nevertheless, we face the paradox of identifying the non-identifiable.

Reason has one more possibility beyond the various models I delineated: to understand this history as the history of its own essence. 'Radical reason' is thus the name of a reasoning that is aware of the accessible inaccessibility of reason as represented throughout its history in a number of models. Simultaneously, radical reason conceives reason's ultimate openness not only to further models, but also to something beyond the scope of reason. It belongs to the essence of reason that it is open to the unreasonable. Reason does not contain itself; radical reason, however, is aware of this fact. If there are reasons of the heart which reason does not know, then there is a 'beyond' of reason which reason cannot reasonably think through. It is radical reason that acknowledges that there is no reason to reason about reason's ultimate reasons: they are unreasonable.

Revelation, Faith, and Reason

The relationship between faith and reason cannot be properly construed without recognizing the central position of revelation. In spite of the efforts of philosophers to focus on the problem of 'the existence of God' or the appropriate relationship between the mind assisted by divine grace and the mind purely natural, the notion of faith becomes meaningless without the notion of revelation. If faith becomes meaningless, 'reason' loses its

contours as well. Historically, reason is defined by faith, and faith is defined by revelation. This does not mean that an abstract or 'natural' notion of reason is entirely meaningless; it belongs to the fundamental fact of our world that even abstract notions have a limited validity. If, however, we wish to understand the relationship between faith and reason, we need to recur to the fact of revelation. Theology presupposes this fact as its axiom; another kind of thinking, which we may call philosophy or philosophical theology, investigates the possibility and the necessity of this fact. However, if philosophy is not inspired by faith, it has no means to conceive revelation. If reason is connected to faith, we find ourselves in the circle in which faith and reason revolve around the hub of revelation. Of course it is possible to focus merely on the phase 'reason' or 'faith' in this circle, but in as much as we want to understand the nature of the circle, we have to understand the togetherness of faith and reason with respect to their centre.

(p. 68) Once the novelty of such notions as self-giving faith, self-revelation, or transcendental reason is recognized, a view of history as the theatre of an accelerating collapse or a 'heretic return' becomes questionable. History may not be meaningful in a prosaic sense; but it is factually provable that, in spite of all the documented disarrays, fundamentally important insights have been born in theology as well as in philosophy. It may not be fully unreasonable to study this history along the lines of a collapse or a return, or again on the basis of particular developments without any intellectual significance. It is nevertheless more fruitful to view the study of history as part and parcel of the proper understanding of the circle of faith and reason in its ontological and historical dimensions.

On the other hand, we are not in the position to offer a unified and ultimate understanding. With each generation of theologians and philosophers new possibilities emerge to develop novel understandings. These understandings may not lead us to groundbreaking discoveries; they might, however, help us to understand better the mind of past thinkers and the evolution of our most important theological and philosophical notions. We need to see, nevertheless, that the possibility is always present to reach new understandings which deepen the past recognitions in fundamental ways. If we compare an orthodox icon from the ninth century with Giotto's *Life of Jesus*, or Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* with Rubens's or Rembrandt's paintings of Christ, we certainly see the important changes not only in their respective styles and techniques but more importantly in their understanding of the figure of Christ in peculiar ways. Similarly, the understanding of revelation, faith, and reason has its own peculiarities in various ages and it offers a characteristic development which is open to the work of 'courageous thinking', as John Paul II described the task of the philosophers (*Fides et ratio* 106). This openness to enrichment is crucially important in our understanding of faith and reason, because it is in this context that we may come to a clear understanding of the meaning of our traditions. Traditions in matters of the relationship between faith and reason are just as important as the work of the great artists of the past; nevertheless, to paint again El Greco's *La resurrection* today would not be genuine art. In understanding faith and reason we need to find courageous ways to conceive their correlation, with revelation in the centre, so that the tradition of

an Augustine or a Thomas Aquinas may be put in a new light and their minds may be better understood.

In contemporary philosophy of religion, we find an intense discussion of the possibility of proving God's existence, the nature and attributes of God, or, on the other hand, the problematic character of faith and religion in general. We can explore rich arguments for the existence of God in the works of Alvin Plantinga (1981) and Richard Swinburne (1981). In these approaches, faith and reason are notions used in a certain sense that is rarely contrasted with other conceptions, and their historical context remains invisible. In other approaches we find a fruitful application of some consequences of phenomenology on the basis of a renewed understanding of a *theologia negativa* (Marion 2002). In anti-theological and atheistic theories, such as those of Daniel Dennett or Richard Dawkins we find a notion of reason at work, which appears natural merely in a certain technological perspective (Dennett 2006; Dawkins 2006). 'Instrumental reason can no more provide its own purpose than the control over meaning can ground itself' (Walsh (p. 69) 2008: 11). It is not unproblematic to identify faith, reason, or revelation with a particular model, because models belong together and we need a comprehensive understanding of them which necessarily transcends the limits of the particular models. This understanding is offered by the radical approach, in which we are able not only to see the historical changes of our various notions, but also their development and the need for a radical interpretation of what they tell us today.

Radical revelation is about God's self-disclosure in a decisive divine-human encounter, which can be witnessed not only in the lives of individual persons, but also of communities and whole cultures; and such a relevance can be recognized as a point of orientation for the whole of mankind. Radical faith is an ultimate act of self-sacrifice in which human beings give themselves for the God they have become unable to identify. And radical reason is about the historical changes of the notion of the human mind, a self-reflective awareness, which grasps itself in its own historical evolution and openness to the future. Radical reason seeks novel forms of יָכַח, 'ἔλεγχος' or '*argumentum*' (Isa. 1:18; Heb. 11:1) so that God may not remain 'a hidden God', '*deus absconditus*'. Rather, as Viktor Frankl suggests, the 'unconscious God' is to become the self-revealing God, '*deus revelatus*' for a human person, whereby a relationship of unconditional and mutual commitment becomes possible in a non-proportional way (Frankl 1974: 51).

One is not without assistance in this undertaking. '*Spe salvi facti sumus*—in hope we were saved,' as Pope Benedict quotes the words of St Paul. In our perspective, this hope consists in that new configurations of faith and reason become possible on the basis of an ever fuller perception of the unfolding revelation as the centre of the unceasingly revolving circle of reason and faith. Even amidst the ever newer versions of instrumental reason in an age of technology, we cannot avoid the challenge of faith; inescapably we find ourselves in a circle the centre of which remains the often neglected and still unavoidable fact of revelation.

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Analogy and the Fate of Reason

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores a plurivocity in the meaning(s) of reason and analogy, and suggests a vocation for analogy if it is to redeem its plurivocal promise. Reason is understood differently depending on which sense of being is in the ascendant. If univocity is in the ascendant, as in modern rationalism, a philosophical and theological feel for what analogy means tends to be weakened. If equivocity comes back, reason goes to school with finesse and is more attentive to figurations of being that elude precise determinations and is more hospitable to the analogical way. Analogy is explored in modern rationalism and empiricism, in Kant's critical reason, in Hegel's speculative reason, and in a number of post-dialectical forms. Finally, the chapter suggests there is something metaxological about analogy in trying to be true to the between-space of communication between the finite and the divine.

Keywords: analogy, being, reason, philosophy, univocity, metaxology, modernity, Kant, Hegel

Analogy, Plurivocity, and the Fate of Reason

ANALOGY and reason (*logos*) have hugely defined the traditions of reflection on the most ultimate issues in philosophy and theology. What 'reason' means is not always univocally clear. Indeed, a certain plurivocity in its meaning is inseparable from the meaning(s) of analogy. In the philosophical tradition, giving a *logos* is central. In the monotheistic tradition in its Christian form, *logos* is identified with God, overtly with the second person of the Trinity. The familial relation of both philosophical and religious *logos* has been applauded in some instances (recently and notably by Pope Benedict XVI). In other instances, interpretation of divine *logos*, understood religiously, is seen as too dominated by the Greek *logos*—the voice of Athenian *logos* speaks over the voice of Jerusalem, muffling or garbling it. To voice something is to offer a *logos*, and hence we cannot avoid asking whether there is one voice or many voices, or one voice that voices itself in many voices.

Thus we find ourselves revisiting the classical position, expressed in Aristotle's famous saying: '*to on legetai pollachōs*', 'being is voiced in many senses' (e.g. *Met.* IV.2 [1003a 33], VI.2 [1026a 33]). In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Thomas Aquinas concurs and echoes Aristotle: '*ens dicitur multipliciter*' (*In IV Meta.* 1.535 and 539). This plurivocity bears on the univocal, equivocal, and analogical senses of being. Very generally put, the univocal sense of being puts the stress on sameness; the equivocal sense puts the stress on difference, a difference sometimes dissimulated by our ways of speaking. The analogical sense somehow mixes the same and the different, being partly one and partly the other, and with reference to the relation of the sameness and difference to something shared by both. Aristotle's distinction between the univocal, equivocal, and analogical (p. 73) senses of being is taken up by Aquinas and put to work, though what he himself says explicitly is not extensive. Admirers and commentators have devoted much attention to what his remarks might entail, for they reflect something woven into the texture of his thought, especially bearing on the divine difference. Is the plurivocity of being itself, or simply our ways of talking about being? Some commentators have underplayed any metaphysical dimensions to the matter, others have developed metaphysical implications in ways more explicated than in Aquinas himself. In any event, voicing happens in a space of betweenness, a space of relationality. Analogy is concerned not only about a middle way between univocity and equivocity, but about this very between of relationality. Analogy is itself a kind of between and communicates a between.

Traditional discussion has also focused on different kinds of analogy: analogy of proportion, of proper proportionality, of attribution. It is worth remembering that analogy also has roots in *mathematical* proportion or *ratio*, roots not unconnected with the fate of reason. There is also what one might call analogy of origination bearing on the likeness of a source and its issue. I will return to how Aquinas speaks of an analogical agent (*agens analogicum*). Important overall in analogy is the play of same and other, the intermediating between likeness and unlikeness. The intermediating itself is a dynamic relating rather than a static structure. A dynamic interplay can always be threatened by loss of equilibrium of same and other, likeness and unlikeness. The loss of equilibrium would tilt, on the one side, to pure univocity, on the other, to pure equivocity. But these are limiting cases of abstraction. Pure univocity would be unintelligible, for one could mark no difference in it, or between pure univocal being and something other. Instead of a voicing of being, one would end with Parmenidean silence at best. Pure equivocity would also threaten intelligibility, for we could mark nothing definite or determinate in it, or relate one difference to another. For to relate a difference to another difference, must mean the differences are invested with some identity, identity ruled out *ex hypothesi*. Pure equivocity is as unintelligible as absolute difference without any determinate difference and hence seems indistinguishable from pure univocity. These impossible extremities are the unintelligible limits between which analogical thinking, at its best, is poised, a between wherein a rich interweaving of sameness and difference is effected.

What of analogy and the fate of reason? Fate brings to mind the ancient notion of *Moira*, the ineluctable necessity above even the gods and Zeus. In the monotheistic religions nothing at all can be above God and a mindful providence is affirmed rather than an im-

personal fate. There have been strands in the philosophical tradition for which reason is analogous to fate, that is, as ultimately an impersonal power determined inexorably by and to necessity. God may be a more personalized being suitable for the many, while reason offers the more ultimate principle suitable for the few. Clearly Catholic theology must reject this way. Nevertheless, there are analogous universal claims made for Catholic thought. An important question is whether there is an univocal universal or a plurivocal one, or perhaps an analogical universality in which the putative disjunction between the gods of religion and philosophy is mediated rather than entrenched.

(p. 74) Modern Enlightenment and, in particular, Hegel's historicized version of Christian providence, suggests that reason is fated to surpass religion and all its figures, including its analogical figurations. Currently, post-Hegelians and anti-Hegelian thinkers resist any overt suggestion of providence, either religious or secularized. An improvident economy of chance and necessity is a more likely default position. The providence of Hegelian reason claims to sublate, thereby complete, the equivocity of religious figuration, but this claim comes riddled with its own equivocity. The fated fulfilment is followed by a rash of revolts against speculative reason, ranging from positivistic claims to scientistic enlightenment to existential rebellion against systematic reason as such. Heidegger, of course, claims that such a putative fulfilment just totalized a falling away from an original unconcealing of being. The Hegelian and Heideggerian fatalities of reason yield two opposed forms of historicist univocity—reason as fated to teleological completion in immanence, reason as in the secret services of the fated oblivion of being. Analogy does not fit into any of these extremes. It cannot be included in positivistic univocity, in existential equivocity, in any self-contained speculative system, and yet it is not completely outside all reasonable systematics.

We must ask if there is a plurivocal promise in reason itself. In what follows, I will not quite propose a fate of reason; rather I will explore how reason understands itself differently depending on which sense of being is in the ascendant. If univocity is in the ascendant, as it tends to be in modern rationalism, a philosophical and theological feel for what analogy might mean tends to be weakened. If equivocity comes back, as it inevitably does, reason goes to school with finesse and is more attentive to figurations of being that elude precise determinations and are more hospitable to the analogical way. I will indicate how the oscillation between univocity and equivocity can be understood dialectically, but also how modern dialectical reason, because still very much under the sovereignty of a reason that would be self-determining, fails to do justice to what is of the essence in true analogy, namely, the superlative difference of the divine, beyond determination and self-determination. Finally I will suggest that there is something metaxological about analogy in trying to be true to the between space of communication between the finite and the divine, and the dynamic intermediating of likening and unlikening eventuating there. Philosophical and theological reason ask for such a metaxological mindfulness. I will ask if a certain finesse for the analogy of origination has something to offer within the postmodern ethos which stresses the aesthetics of happening—understood now not in an aestheticist manner but with robust ontological stress.

Analogy, Reason, and Religious Figuring

Though associated with the senses of being in classical metaphysics, analogy is theologically connected with how we might intelligibly speak about the divine, especially (p. 75) given, in the monotheistic tradition, God's transcendence to finite categories. How we figure the divine is not self-evident, nor indeed is what we mean by reason. Analogy is a way of figuring, in light of being itself as open to figuration. There is a given ethos of being in which we participate, but which we figure and also can reconfigure. Figures need not necessarily be 'merely' figurative, though fidelity to the ethos of being is asked of us. Figures can aesthetically word the between, the *metaxu* (the 'in between') of being. Like being, figuring itself is plurivocal, hence always neighbours on the possibility of the equivocal. Important in the fate of reason is the way a more rigid rational sense of figuring may well think it must uncouple itself from any taint of equivocity. Important will be the tension between a rational figuration as tempted to determinative univocal fixation and analogical figuration as opening to what exceeds such univocal determination.

Though often associated with Catholicism, analogy has pagan roots in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Analogy in St Thomas entails a balance of identity and difference, continuity and discontinuity, with a tilt towards hyperbolic difference in the case of God's uniqueness, a difference always bordering for us on a kind of equivocity that we cannot completely immanently mediate, though the divine might mediate the equivocity. We are familiar with the theological placing of analogy on the Protestant index by Barth when he refers to the analogy of being as 'the invention of the Anti-Christ' (Barth 1975: xiii). We are also familiar with how the ex-Catholic Heidegger dismissed analogy as bound up with the 'system of Catholicism', a mouldy relic of onto-theology. And yet this rootedness and continuity with the philosophical tradition might be counted as a point in its favour—if theologically one thinks differently to Barth, or philosophically to Heidegger (e.g. Przywara; Balthasar; Stein; Tracy; Hart; Betz).

The figurative dimension of analogy is most fruitful where our perplexity exceeds univocal determination. God is not a determinate being, but how should we think about what is not finitely determinable or is 'trans-determinate'? God is not a being, not a creature. Moreover as infinite, God is not just the dialectical other of the finite, but infinitely other than the finite. And yet God is in relation to the finite, even granting a mysterious and hyperbolic asymmetry of the divine. This is not a matter of some dialectical mutuality of sameness and otherness in which likeness and unlikeness are on an equal footing, and so can be held together as moments of a more inclusive whole. The similitude is always exceeded by the dissimilitude. Augustine: '*Si comprehendis non est Deus*' ('if you comprehend it, it is not God'). Aquinas: '*Deus semper maior*' ('God is always greater'). Analogy need not be deaf to postmodern concerns with difference qua difference. Barth and Heidegger to the contrary, the safeguarding of God's transcendence and being's otherness is very much at issue. On this score philosophy and theology are siblings in the same family.

Relevant here is a certain plurivocity in the notion of reason itself. Recall how, for instance, the sameness or difference of theoretical and practical reason is an important issue in both ancient and modern thought. Their sameness or difference will dictate different tasks of a philosophical and theological nature. What is meant by reason in modernity is not quite what the ancients meant by *theōria* and its contemplative regard of what is, simply as it is. Is there a univocity subtending theoretical and practical reason (p. 76) or is their difference irreducible? The different sense of *theōria* in the ancient world has implications for both the analogical sense of being as well as the fate of reason. In the ancient and medieval view, *theōria* was not just a matter of our construction but more originally one of our reception. It was not a matter of a projection of our cognitive power but of a noetic porosity to the ultimate things. We are first recipients of gifts, not producers of products. We might be the latter in regard to practical reason, yet there is an other orientation which opens us more primordially to what is beyond us. This other porosity is not unrelated to the analogical sense of being and orientation to the divine.

In modernity, theoretical reason is tied up with hypothetical constructs, themselves projects of the human being. And while there is a speculative side to projective conjecture, there is a recessed practical project at work here. The other porosity, just mentioned, tends to be recessed by this practical project. The modern slogan is: ‘We know what we construct’. And hence the known is as much a reflection of us as of the things themselves—maybe more a reflection of us than what is other. The essential form of reason must then be self-reflective. Theoretical reason is itself a project, hence recessed in it is a pragmatic relation of things for us. Many moderns have welcomed this, rejoiced in it. Reason becomes more practical than ever in the broad sense of serving human desire. It is useful, or is to be useful, and ‘use’ always implies some relation of being for us, to us. The shadow of an instrumentalization of being appears here, since it is not the otherness of what is known that is important but its relation to us and its being of service to this relation. If analogical thinking persists, we will think of our others on the analogy of ourselves and our self-relation. Analogy will not be a porous between space of relationality; it will be a self-mediating space between us and ourselves. We will only be able to think what is other on the analogy of ourselves. Analogy will also be projective of our power rather than participant in a more primal porosity between us and what is other. If there is a different stress on our porosity to the transhuman in premodernity, modern pragmatics risks clogging this and making relation finally into relation for us. This makes it hard to enter more intimately into an analogical view of things and God.

Modern Reason, Geometrical Figuring, Weakening Analogy

Finesse for the figurative tends to be overtaken in modernity by a more dominating stress on rational univocity. Such finesse meets with an epistemic irritation with the equivocity of things, and is overtaken by a more aggressive univocal reconfiguration of the ethos of being. The analogical sense of being, poised in the play of likeness and unlikeness, hos-

pitable to communications suggestive of mystery rather than fixed on unambiguous assertions, loses footing in this reconfiguration. Aesthetically, figures can be incarnations of what is noetic. The figure is the body of communication. *La bella figura*: an incarnation of being that aesthetically delights. Religiously one might think of (p. 77) the sacramental world as divinely figured: real presence in the elemental things granting sustenance, consummately communicated in consecrated bread and wine. Finesse for this tends to weaken in the modern univocalization we see in the thoroughgoing mathematicization of nature, the objectivizing reduction of given being to a valueless thereness, and the singular elevation of the autonomous human being into the univocal exemplification of immanent freedom.

Thus we are not surprised by a diminution of finesse for the question of God among philosophers in modernity, from Descartes onwards. Forgetfulness of the protocols going with analogy is coupled with either a more direct claim to move univocally from the finite to the divine creator, or with the absence of any such motion, if an equivocal scepticism about cognition paralyzes every move to what is more than the finite. That said, worth noting is the sense of analogy with origins in mathematical proportion. A:B::C:D—mathematical *ratio* is a rational figure. This is not just a relation, but a relation of relations—a relation on one side of the equation is like a relation on the other side. Of course, if the 'term' on one side of the *ratio* is God, it is impossible to fix the terms, or even the entire structure of the proportion with exact univocity. In connection with the divine, analogy is bounded by mystery. Nevertheless, the relation of analogy to mathematical proportion is significant, since mathematics is a formation of rational thinking that pursues the highest exactitude possible in its sphere of operation. Exactitude here is defined by the measure of a fixed univocity. That is, the terms at issue must have all ambiguity excluded. Such a desideratum influences our understanding of what is essential to reason. Not surprisingly, mathematical thinking has been taken, in ancient as well as modern times, as the paradigm for rational thinking. Reason becomes associated with the ideal of unambiguous univocity. Equivocation per se is understood as a problem to be overcome.

Recall how Plato was attracted to the precisions of geometry, and above the Academy's entrance reportedly hung: 'Let no one enter who has not studied geometry'. Of course, there is also a thinking higher than the dianoetics of geometry which is noetically receptive and which Plato associates with dialectic. Obviously modern rationalism was very much defined by the mathematical ideal, and one thinks in particular of Spinoza's way of philosophizing *more geometrico*. Here is one of the sources of the occlusion and the eventual eclipse of the God of analogy. Spinoza serves as one exemplary instance, on this score, with many descendants sharing his commitment to a certain univocity of being, understood also in an entirely immanent or horizontal sense. I think of Deleuze today, for instance, for whom Spinoza is the 'Christ of the philosophers'. Huge swathes of German idealism are bred from seeds of Kant, Fichte, and Spinoza, coupled with a widespread repudiation of the asymmetrical superior transcendence of the God beyond the whole, so beloved of earlier analogical thinkers.

Perplexities about the divine may strike us which open thought beyond what can be made exact in terms of precise determinations. The signs of the divine may communicate to us in a manner that looks equivocal. In Pascal's terms we require then *l'esprit de finesse* rather than *l'esprit de géométrie*. Diminution of finesse for the signs of the divine accompanies the growing ascendancy of geometry in modernity. One might say that (p. 78) the modern weakening of analogy has much to do with a certain reconfiguration of the ethos of being. The 'too muchness' of the given ethos of being, its overdeterminacy, is seen as too elusive, as even an intolerably equivocal milieu that must be reconfigured by a determining univocity that will overcome all given ambiguities. And the reconfiguration will be theoretical and practical: theoretical in the mathematicization of nature, practical in the invention of machines and technologies which will further our power over given creation in its otherness. The project of being 'master and possessor of nature' (Descartes) reforms our way of figuring things in the direction of mathematical science with technological instrumentality serving us as the end of all things. Given creation is stripped of its ambiguous and qualitative textures, and reduced to rational, mathematicizable structure. But stripped of such qualitative textures creation as nature communicates less and less of the signs of the divine. It is just a bare objective thereness, twinned with a subjectivity framing the void givenness in terms of its projective power. The deeper seeds of an analogical dwelling in being wither.

It might seem, then, that it is the fate of analogy itself to weaken, if not to disappear, in the more modern forms of reason. In premodern reason there was more finesse for the plurivocal significance of the analogical interplay of likeness and unlikeness, and not least because there was more porosity between religion and philosophy. In the modern ideal of autonomous thinking, reason is self-determining, hence not in service to something exceeding its own self-determination. One might call it self-serving reason, but if so, its porosity to what exceeds reason's own immanent terms is in tension with its aim to be fully self-determining. Sometimes the porosity is entirely closed off. Sometimes a protocol of border patrols is negotiated in the conflict of the faculties (Kant). Sometimes the closure of the border is conceived quite in the opposite manner, namely, as the sovereignty of reason over the immanent whole, and no space is to remain for religious faith as a genuine other with which reason is in familial dialogue.

Whatever we say about Scotus, there is no doubt that in an entirely immanent sense univocity enjoys sovereignty in the modern conception of reason. The root of analogical thinking in the mathematical *ratio* comes to the fore in a manner that leads to the accentuation of precise univocity and its fixation, to the diminishment of the analogical interplay between others that are both like and unlike. It is no accident that a *mathēsis* of nature should be the first desideratum of the modern rationalization of the givenness of being. More deeply, the claim of reason is to be seen as a project for the univocalization of all being. A project: it is not that the equivocal is not recognized—quite the opposite—there is quite a feel for equivocities but these are essentially problems to be confronted and surmounted. The problem carries the anticipation of its own solution when it is properly formulated, that is to say, univocally articulated, and the solution will be the dispelling of the equivocity as entirely as possible. The project itself extends to the whole—

where there is equivocity, there shall be univocity, and formulated in the most precise mathematical form possible. Where these precisions are not now forthcoming, this still remains the goal, and the project will work towards its attainment in all the areas of investigation. The pursuit of autonomy goes hand in hand with this project of univocal reason. The univocity of human self-serving is twinned (p. 79) with the self-service of univocal reason, and their sovereignties are to be extended over all being as other.

The *mathēsis* of nature, under the aegis of univocity, does not yield quite the univocity desired—it never does in fact. The equivocal keeps coming back in many forms. I invoke Whitehead, one of the heroes of modern logical univocity, someone whose first academic career was as a professor of mathematics. However, at the end of his second career as a speculative metaphysician and as a different kind of hero, he said importantly: 'the exactness is a fake'. He also indicated something of the soft ground on which modern scientistic univocity stood, all the while believing it was close to hitting bottom level: the fallacy of simple location (Whitehead 1925). Analogical thinking entails a mindfulness beyond *l'esprit de géométrie*, but the geometrical mind can well be included in the finessed analogical mind in so far as it, too, has a root in mathematical *ratio*. Can the *ratio* be given univocal exactitude? The answer is sometimes yes, sometimes no. This means there is a *ratio* beyond rationality in the geometrical mode. More generally, there is analogical reason beyond the mathematicization of reason we find in modern science. If the latter is hot in pursuit of the acme of univocity, the former has to be open to the return to the equivocal, and with the aim of a mindful mediating of what it communicates.

That the fate of modern reason is not just univocally its Enlightenment version is suggested by the fact that the Enlightenment is shadowed by its Romantic twin. Modern reason is shadowed by what it rejects as other to it. This other, as its shadow, is its intimate other. In broad strokes, the twinning of Enlightenment and Romanticism reflects an analogous twinning of the *l'esprit de géométrie* and *l'esprit de finesse*. The latter tries to recuperate a sense of the analogically appropriate, though if there is a root of analogy in mathematical proportion, analogy also has its connection with Enlightenment reason. I want to draw attention to the resort to analogy in the *argument from design*, formulated paradigmatically on the analogy of the watch. The analogy: as watch to watchmaker, so creation to God. This argument was much discussed in the eighteenth century when a combination of rationalism and empiricism, dianoetic and aesthetic univocity was in the ascendant. The aesthetic univocity of creation as a machine could be the basis of an analogical argument offering a dianoetic univocity to reason in connection with the machine-maker God. If this is an argument from analogy, based on a more or less univocalized picture of nature as a machine, it does not escape the equivocity it flees. Because the likeness is in interplay with unlikeness, diverse possibilities are allowed. There is an openness in the analogical inference that cannot be dispelled. There is nothing absolutely univocal about the aesthetic givenness of the world.

A theological/metaphysical finesse might be required to read the signs of the divine that might be communicated in the openness of that between space, a space in which immanence and transcendence are plurivocally intermediated but never reduced simply to one

totality. One could say that for analogical thinking the plurivocity of signs is of positive significance. It is not a bad equivocity and a failure of univocal precision. It is worth noting that what we take as the most significant of signs tends to be dependent on what dominates in our efforts to configure the ethos of given being. Thus in the (p. 80) mechanistic world-picture, the likeness of the watch dominates in Paley's version of the argument from design: our mechanisms are taken as a sign of a divine machine-maker. The entirety of creation is taken in under the '*as if*' *sign* of the machine. God is thought analogically under this determinate, that is, univocalizing 'as if' sign. The fixed precision of satisfied univocity is never reached. For the equivocity of the 'as if' can be turned in a sceptical direction, as it was by Hume, simply by noting features of the immanent world that tell against a direct, univocal inference to the God of monotheism. If nothing else, perplexity about evil troubles the 'as if' in relation to the inference to the goodness of God. Perhaps the play of likeness and unlikeness might form the basis for the inference to an apprentice god, or something other. In any case, some equivocity returns in the 'as if'.

There can be something deeper about the Romantic reaction to the Enlightenment in so far as the immanent whole is more likened to an organism. The immanent pantheistic divinity that goes with it brings its own new equivocities, not least about immanent evil. And though there is a secret employment of analogical thinking, it is not necessarily hospitable to the insuperable sense of divine difference we find in the older form of analogy. Pan(en)theism offers us a more immanent rhapsodic divinity, a dancer who cannot be told from the dance, with saturated aesthetic resonances that cannot quite be univocalized, and also with (quasi-)ethical resonances of an immanent self-determination of humanity. These resonances continue to resound into our own time. But overall we see in a plurivocal way how even in the immanences of a more thoroughgoing univocalization of creation, and of the spaces between creation and the divine, signs of transcendence keep coming back. Though there is an equivocity to these signs, they do ask us if they necessitate something like a renewal of analogical thinking. In the pursuit of univocal sameness, whether scientistic or aesthetic, equivocal differences keep reappearing—testament to the recurrent rhythm of likening and unlikening in the unfolding of things.

Moralizing Analogy: The 'As if' of Kantian Practical Reason

If something of the fate of reason in modernity is bound up with the interplay of rationalism and empiricism, this is no less true of the mongrel transcendental form of Kant who tries to breed critical reason from a mingling of the two. Kant ends up with an '*as if*' mode of postulating God, and this 'as if' is related to analogy, though it involves a weakening of any cognitive claim we might make in a speculative or theoretical manner. When Kant speaks of a transcendental philosophy this is not the traditional Aristotelian–Thomist way of speaking of the transcendentals as dealing with transcategorial universality bearing on being, one, true, good, perhaps beauty. Transcendentals are hypercategorial, for beyond the more usual sense of the universals dealing with kinds (p. 81) of beings, they have a

bearing on being as such and all being. Kant's sense of transcendental reason has to do with our cognitive powers rather than directly with being itself. The transcendental is not to be defined either by the aesthetic sensibility of empiricism or the *ratio* of the rationalist but with what enables and holds together both as epistemic powers. Ultimately, there is the transcendental subject, ground of all our knowing, ultimate point of unity or synthesis, making experience intelligible by the imposition of the categories of the understanding on the flux of the sensuous given.

Kant held that reason was the faculty of the unconditioned, and it is marked by an impulse to transcend experience, even though it can make no justified theoretical claims about the ultimate, about God. Of interest for our purposes is a kind of analogical component to Kant's *practical* reason. Though he attacked the arguments of theoretical reason for God, on moral grounds we must think of God as if he does exist. This we must do to make sense of our moral being as under duty to an unconditionally obligating law. If there is here an analogical 'as', it is in the form of a practical, moral 'as if'. Kant often thinks of God rather deistically, that is, in terms of an immanent mechanism defined over against a God beyond the mechanism; still on moral grounds we must think *as if* God existed. There is no absolute rational univocity about this 'as if', and rather more a kind of persisting equivocity. God is like a regulative ideal we must postulate—a *projected* transcendence as other. We cannot theoretically affirm such a God to be, but must think morally 'as if' a moral God were. There is always a rationalistic cautiousness about Kant when venturing beyond (sense) experience. He tells us we must dare to know, but then he constructs an impressive conceptual edifice to convince us we can know nothing in itself. His is a philosophy of limits, but now he seems to transcend the limits, even transgress his own orders, and now just as quickly he reins in any outreaching to the unconditioned. Reason is torn between immanence and transcendence, though wherever possible Kant wants to make reason at home with itself in immanence.

In a number of places where Kant does talk about analogy, he repeatedly stresses a form of the analogy of proportion. For instance, in *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (Kant 1977: §§ 57–58): in connection with our *as if* knowledge of God, if we use, say, the analogy of the watch to a watchmaker, this 'does not signify (as is commonly understood) an imperfect similarity of two things but a perfect similarity between two quite dissimilar things'. In the *Critique of Judgment* (Kant 1987: §59) he briefly talks about analogy in connection with beauty as a symbol of the moral good. Analogy falls under the symbol as an indirect exhibition of a concept. Again, his example connects with a form of the analogy of proportionality, namely, between a despotic state and a handmill: 'For though there is no similarity between a despotic state and a hand mill, there certainly is one between the rules by which we reflect on the two and on how they operate [*Kausalität*]'. We find something similar in *Religion with the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (Kant 1996: 107). In his *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of* Religion, he talks of 'the noble way of analogy' (Kant 1996: 366) and again it is a form of the analogy of proportion that he identifies (Kant 1996: 366–367, 385–387). Yet all things considered, it is the way of the moral *as if* that is at the centre of his approach to God.

(p. 82) If the Kantian ‘as if’ evidences a kind of analogical thinking such that our moral nature impels us to think of the whole on the likeness of its being governed by a morally just God, there is a kind of transcendence being granted which seems to make less secure Kant’s central project of making autonomous morality absolutely sufficient through itself alone. His successors were not content with this concession to transcendence. Perhaps Kant was reluctant to make the concession himself but found he was unable to avoid it. He was haunted by the heteronomy of God. His idealist successors wanted to exorcise this heteronomy more thoroughly.

One could see this exorcism as wanting to dispel the *dissimilitude* granted by Aquinas in analogy. If there is an ‘is’ in the analogical likeness of Aquinas it is not Kant’s ‘as if’, nor, as we shall see, Hegel’s ‘is’. Remember that for Kant the ‘as if’ is seen in light of a regulative ideal that we postulate or project into the ‘beyond’. Aquinas holds that we cannot avoid an affirmation of the ‘is’ in cognitive judgement, but the meaning of the analogical ‘is’ differs between the created and the creator. At the same time, the ‘is’ of Aquinas is not the same as Hegel’s concept of being in his *Science of Logic*, namely, the most indigent of categories, an indeterminate thought that immediately passes into nothing. For Aquinas there is something indeterminate about being, but not because it passes into nothing, but because, in the language I would use, it is overdeterminate: more than every determination, it is in excess of determinacy, hence not at all indeterminate but too much for our determination, and this even though every determinate being participates in the gift of being. This is something analogically like to God, which means also unlike, in so far as the ‘too muchness’ of immanent being can never be taken to exhaust the superplus overabundance of God: ‘*Deus semper maior*’. What is always more to God is more even than the overdeterminacy of given being in the prodigious plenitude of all finite creation. His metaphysical and theological finesse for the exceeding difference of the divine means that Aquinas is at home with an ‘as’ that is not a univocal ‘is’ in the rationalistic sense, nor a speculative ‘is’ in the idealistic sense, nor yet a transcendentally equivocal ‘as if’ in the Kantian sense.

Sublating Analogy Speculatively: The Hegelian ‘is’

The Kantian ‘as if’ keeps open a space of difference between immanence and divine transcendence, but Hegel claims there is an equivocation in that difference that reason can speculatively sublate. The Kantian equivocation lies in plotting the limits of reason, and proving by that plotting to be beyond the limits plotted. Kant must be on two sides of the limit to plot the limit. Hegel takes this as the fate of reason, namely, that is cannot be limited, or rather that it posits its own limits and in that act transcends them. As self-limiting, reason is self-surpassing and self-transcending, and hence there is no finite limit to it. Reason is self-serving, and part of its serving is to determine itself, that is, on (p. 83) one side to make itself limited, and on the other side, since this limit is self-limitation, it is no limit, and hence there is an infinity to reason on which Kantian finitude equivocates.

Analogy and the Fate of Reason

How does Hegelian reason relate to analogical thinking? In the main, there is no engagement with the issue as formulated in the Aristotelian–Thomist idiom. Nevertheless, one could argue that the place of analogy in later modernity is deeply affected by Hegel's efforts to develop to completion the power of dialectical-speculative reason. In a sense, this is a continuation of Spinozistic univocity and immanence. This entails a rejection of the signs of the God beyond the whole—there is no such God. The analogical argument from design, mentioned above, can have no meaning if there is no 'over-there' towards which to aim, and if there is no going from 'here' to 'there'. In the rejection of any form of irreducible transcendence, there remains only the 'here'. Not surprisingly, we find a loss of finesse for the meaning of divine dissimilitude. Hegel's criticism and transformation of the transcendentally equivocal reason of Kant is hugely significant for the fate of reason in modernity. There is a speculative reconfiguration of divine transcendence as other, even as reason moves from a regulative to a constitutive role regarding the unconditioned. This might seem to be the consummation of reason. In fact, it is the consummation of the self-determining reason of modernity. This is self-serving reason, not reason in the service of truth not consummated by philosophy's own self-determination, a service such as we find in the premodern porosity of reason and faith.

Hegelian reason would see *equivocation* in the interplay of likeness and unlikeness of analogical thinking. This interplay cannot be completely determined and resists complete self-determination. This must follow from the hyperbolic dissimilitude of the divine. This is rejected as unreasonable for self-determining reason. What cannot be made determinate suggests a lack of intelligibility, suggests something more like an empty indeterminacy. Moreover, the divine dissimilitude is incompatible with the autonomy of reason—it cannot be articulated on a logic of self-determining reason. The Hegelian critique of Kantian limits kicks in again, and the rational unacceptability of a 'beyond' as such is reiterated. Of course, one could ask analogically if the relation on two sides of a limit is exactly the same, or rather a mixture of likeness and unlikeness. For instance, the move from finite to infinite might not be symmetrical with the movement from infinite to finite. For Hegel, between these there is dialectically consummated symmetry—they are the same movement in the end, and hence a more ultimate speculative univocity comes to rule. For analogical thinking, the movement from finite to infinite is not the same as from infinite to finite. Hence they can never be just moments of one symmetrical self-mediating whole, nor of a totality defined by reciprocal determination of one side by the other.

Theologically, the move from creatures to God is not the same as the movement from God to creatures, and yet there is an analogical relation. It is not a finitely determinate relation, nor yet something determined by the autonomous power of self-determining reason. Creation itself testifies to one such asymmetrical movement. So also does redemption: the ultimate surprise of the divine gift of unconditional goodness, given for no reason humans can finally determine and yet not at all unreasonable in the sense of invidiously absurd. From the standpoint of analogical thinking, Hegel's (p. 84) speculative-dialectic of God is oriented to a univocity higher than the Spinozistic univocity, but it hides a dialectical equivocity bearing on the exceeding and asymmetrical difference when it comes to the dissimilitude of the divine. Hegelian reason offers a dialectical sublation of analogy,

claiming to answer equivocities in the analogical relation between God and humans, or religion and philosophy. The effect, however, is to mask *new equivocations* in its claim to reconcile the opposites. Divine transcendence is granted as a figurative way religious people talk, but this is just representational, not truly conceptual. We need a conceptual reconfiguration of the figurative meaning of religious representation, wherein all transcendence is relativized within a new comprehensive immanence. Hegel does not like the postulated character of Kant's God, but he is in the business of a secret postulation: the speculative project of reconstructing the God of transcendence, in constructing a 'God' who in absolutely appearing in immanence also finally disappears as God. God disappears as the transcendent God but reappears as historical man—immanent man who, posthumously to Hegel, appears more honestly down to earth, not at all as the God-man, but as the man-God.

Think of this as *not* bringing *pros hen* equivocation into the neighbourhood of analogy but as transforming equivocation into a speculative univocity in which the One is defined entirely by the self-determination of immanent reason. Divine dissimilitude and transcendence are a mere *Jenseits* to be overcome by that immanent self-determination. Religious representations equivocally fix the divine 'beyond' in an imaginative figure that keeps the divine away in transcendence. That 'away' is to be conceptually overcome in a speculative-dialectical univocity that does not reduce differences to a simple sameness but sublates them in an inclusive unity, including even the difference of divine transcendence. There is an equivocal sting to this, too. For who is the One: the God-man or the man-God?

Analogy and Reason's Desublation: Post-Hegelian Postulations

What of analogy and the fate of reason in post-Hegelian thought? Hegel would be critical of the figurative dimension, seeing analogy to be a representation (*Vorstellung*) which fixed the divine in a beyond. One might argue that it is important to avoid thinking of the analogical figure as defined by a dualistic grid, with a static and quasi-mimetic fixation of the terms in relation. Rather, metaxologically, one must grant dynamic doubling, redoubling, on both sides of the relation of relations: the divine in relation to creation, creation in relation to the divine, the agapeics of the one meeting the groaning of the other, in a metaxological intermediation which allows the analogical avoidance of dualism, monism, and the indeterminate.

In post-Hegelian thought one widespread development is the desublation of rationalistic postulations, and a reconfiguration of analogies of the divine along more (p. 85) humanistic lines. Divine transcendence blanked out, we seem to need a new project: not the postulated projection of a moral God a là Kant, not the speculative sublation of divine difference in an immanent self-serving totality, but a *human project* of entirely immanent self-determination not diffident about showing the face of atheism. There is something thought-provoking in the way Hegel's speculative reconciliation of man and God *reverses* into the aggressive humanistic atheism so prevalent in his left-Hegelian inheritors (Feuer-

bach and Marx are only two obvious instances). Hegel himself envisaged a post-religious humanism reconciled with its religious prehistory, but now his speculative sublation is desublimated, so to say. Reason passes back into a virulent negative dialectic, and more radically still into an atheistic critique and deconstruction of all religion. Instead of the balance of likeness and unlikeness, knowing and not-knowing in analogical thinking, instead of Hegel's absolute knowing which claims the immanent point of a *coincidentia oppositorum*, now there is no knowing of God because there is no God to know. Hegel's absolute knowing generates a humanistic double of God. Its hatred of all 'beyonds' inverts into atheistic critique in search of pure immanence without God, hyperbolically proclaiming itself as the end of history, beyond which nothing greater can be thought.

We move from the cautions of Kant's critical reason, through the overconfidence of Hegel's speculative reason, to a post-Hegelian lack of confidence in reason. The workings of analogy are not to the fore, but just in this absence, it is the case that univocity, equivocity, and their dialectic here engender a crisis of reason, just at the moment of its claimed consummation. There is diffidence about the reach of the univocities of reason in Kant, there is overconfidence in the dialectical reach of reason in Hegel's speculative unity, there is the loss of confidence in reason after Hegel when unity itself becomes more and more a source of suspicion. The suspicion is that while reason is self-serving in one sense, the self served may not be quite the rational sovereign erstwhile sitting on the throne. Something more darkly equivocal is the power behind the throne. The fate of reason, already there in Kant, is to call itself into question, and not find itself in its own free self-service, but doing the *incognito* bidding of another power reason serves—will, economic exploitation, will to power, the unconscious, the libido, impersonal structure, difference itself, whatever. Modern reason's autonomy is threatened, threatens itself with an ominous heteronomy. Something different, not always with a benign difference, insinuates itself into the confidences of the interplay of likening and unlikening. The confidence of analogical interplay seems played out.

Post-Hegelian reason reveals a reversed sublation, a desublation that desublimates. Sublation negates, preserves, and lifts up, but a reverse sublation is a negation that negates but does not lift up and rather brings down. It transcends downwards—not from man to God as ascent but from God to man as a descent that, by negating God above and beyond, is said to restore (alienated) man to his own power. So the story goes. Desublation in the services of human restoration is the self-service of human power. I find recessed analogy in this, a new 'as if'. I call this postulatory finitism (in, e.g., Desmond 2005)—we must hold onto the finite 'as if' it were the ultimate horizon of meaning, beyond which no greater is to be thought. This new postulatory 'as if' initially (p. 86) seeds further postulates that, in turn, issue in the formation of new projects. The asymmetrical transcendence, and hence the dissimilitude of God is pushed out of the way again and again, and humans have appropriated for themselves the ultimate power. If there is piety in post-Hegelian impiety it shares with Hegelian piety a devotion to self-serving immanence. Both are renegade to the twofold order of immanence and transcendence present in the older analogy.

After the desublation of divine power follows the sublation of (divine) otherness into human power, but after this follows a *second desublation*. Behind the game of peek-a-boo of immanent transcendence in this postulatory project, reason seems fated to front for some non-rational other, say, the machinations of will to power. The first desublation promises ultimate power to us, the second desublation descends into what is below reason. There is a theme of depth here, but it reverses the Platonic analogy of the sun which draws us beyond the cave towards the transcendence of the good. In the cave we are underground men, but now the analogy suggests a desublating directionality, pointing down and down into a more original darkness. We are digging below the cave to pits where the sun seems not to penetrate. (Of course, on this view, even on the surface of the earth, the sun does not shine either.) This turn away from higher transcendence and the penetration of our transcending into the lower underground is something we find with Schopenhauer, Dostoevsky, and Nietzsche, and many others right into our own time—Bataille, for instance. There is dissimilitude here but it emerges from below. It is the abyss, the dark origin, it is the inhuman. The fate of reason is to be revealed to itself as not reasonable. The inhuman is the immanent other of the human.

Schopenhauer used the following analogy to explain his metaphysics in which will is more primordial than reason: the world is like a *macro-anthropos*. The anthropos is the one like to which, *pros hen*, the world is to be understood. The world is like the human self writ large. There are traces of a similar likeness in Nietzsche also, though it is often dissimulated: the world is to be, in Zarathustra's words, the humanly thinkable world. There is a kind of *pros hen* equivocation, for the One relative to which all analogies tend is will to power. Interestingly, the macro-anthropic position tends to its own inversion in so far as the human will comes now to be understood in terms of the dark underground of all-pervasive will to power. If we dig down into ourselves as caves we come across in ourselves the other of self, and are faced with the inhuman in the human, or the transhuman. This is an immanent otherness not fully subject to our own self-determination. This immanent otherness has much to do with the religious, though it may be pursued as a way into the darkness of more infernal caves, rather than the tunnel of the purification of our porosity that, as with Dante, leads from the underground of Hell up to the mountain of purgatory.

Post-Hegelian desublation leads to the self-deconstruction of reason rather than the self-sublation. Interestingly, it is the sublime that serves as the sign of this desublimation of reason with some of the postmoderns, even those using Kant, Lyotard, for instance. Opposites meet. The sublime is monstrous. The human subject is abject. You might say Nietzsche already understood this impossible condition when he said that we need art to save us from the truth. We need the *as if* truth of art to protect us from *the* truth, for (p. 87) *the* truth finally is horror. But if we know the truth that the truth of art is only an 'as if' truth, then we know it is not true, and horror should come back, if we refuse to deceive ourselves or act in aesthetic bad faith.

If this is the fate of reason, it is clear that any robust sense of analogy in the classical sense is impossible. And yet invocations of analogy are appropriate, in so far as post-Hegelian relations to reason are very much tempted by *aesthetic* saving. We are figuring

things once again. In every aesthetic response, Nietzsche's included, there is something that might border on the possibility of something more open to the analogous. The figurative is unavoidable, but how to figure? How to reconfigure the ethos of being in fidelity to its truth? These are some of the questions facing postmodern analogy. On the whole, the fate of reason in postmodernism reflects many dimensions of Nietzsche where the aesthetic has replaced the religious. Instead of the old porosity of faith and reason, religion and philosophy, it is the new faith in an 'as if' salvation by art. The postmoderns are more comfortable with the aesthetic play of possibility. Often, one suspects an *incognito* insinuation of the sacred is post-Enlightenment secular art. At best, secretly it is a wooing of the sacred; at worst, it is the outrage trying to provoke the sacred into showing its hand—execrating it when it retains its silent mystery. This is a complex story of the displacement of religious transcendence into art. Its hiding there is part of the fate of post-Kantian reason. We need to come clean on the religious. In our recent reconfiguration of the ancient quarrel of the poet and philosopher, the philosopher is caricatured as the henchman of univocity, the poet honoured as the gay troubadour of plurivocity. Spare a thought for the religious witness who is sent packing, even before she or he arrives, as the decrepit retainer of a repressive transcendence.

The Vocation of Trans-dialectical Reason: Analogy on the Verge of the Hyperbolic

Is the fate of reason then the liquidation of analogy? Or is there a trans-dialectical sense of reason? I would say yes to the latter: reason allows the dialectical play of univocity and equivocity, and yet is more than self-determining dialectic. Reason is not simply self-serving but is opened to what is more than human reason at home with itself. Such reason I would call metaxological, since it is concerned with a *logos* of the *metaxu*, with 'wording' 'the between'. We might look anew at analogical thinking relative to this between, and especially in connection with a sense of superior transcendence. Such an approach would bring the analogical closer to the verge of the hyperbolic: the unlikeness of what is like and beyond all likeness. The analogical 'as' opens to a hyperbolic 'above' (*huper*). (In *Being and the Between* and *God and the Between* I speak of the 'is' of metaphor, the 'as' of analogy, the 'with' of symbol, the 'above' of hyperbole). Nor need a metaxological reconsideration of analogy be a retrospective wistfulness for a supposedly exhausted tradition. It may harbour promise for renewed thinking (p. 88) of divine difference, after Hegelian reason and its post-idealist deconstruction. Between the overconfidence of idealist reason and the abjectness of anti-idealistic non-reason, there is an intermediation of divine intimacy and divine dissimilitude.

Our reason reveals a *metaxu*: between ignorance and wisdom; between finitude and infinity; between our being truthful and the truth. Analogical thinking can offer a fidelity to this between: truthful without being the truth; being truthful is being both like and unlike the truth. What about the relation to superior transcendence? Sometimes one wonders about a kind of *horizontal* analogy on the plane of immanence. Consider, for instance,

Deleuze's interest in the baroque. The baroque itself presents us with something like a threshold between the aesthetic and religious, at times a kind of religious aestheticism playing with faith. It playfully reveals a believing and a not quite believing, a playing with transcendence above it but without univocal sureness. There are exfoliations of immanence, mimicries of a more vertical transcendence, mimicries tempted to remain a still-immanent transcendence. The playful equivocities are delighted to tease the now perhaps controvertible otherness of the vertical transcendence that perplexes our aesthetic playfulness.

Given the postmodern stress on otherness more robust than immanent autonomy, given the aesthetic stress in its figuration of things, perhaps the analogy of origination might be reinvoked, not in view of the religious as the threshold of the aesthetic, but of the aesthetic as the threshold of the religious. Analogy is not the constructing of a quasi-mathematical system or science, is not 'merely' figurative, but calls for aesthetic finesse for figures with metaphysical and religious weight. There is a receptive side to this finesse, it is not simply constructive. Metaxological reason, as trans-dialectical, suggests a vertical analogy exceeding the plane of immanence, though manifested in the hyperbolic figures of that plane. One might say, such analogical figures can be graced and graced because created. There is a patience of being (*passio essendi*) more original than our endeavour to be (*conatus essendi*). It calls for a certain reversal of projective aesthetics. We are not creative first, but created. There is first given form and figure, and our enabled figuration entails a power first received rather than projected. Received power allows an elevation (*huper-ballein*, to throw or be thrown above) that is not a dialectical sublation because the creature is what it is, from the origin, as endowed. Likewise, the issue is more than the post-idealistic desublation, since after all we receive ourselves in being elevated beyond ourselves, before we can ever try to elevate ourselves. A transcendence other than our self-transcending is already intimately enabling of our immanent self-transcending.

Aquinas's *agens analogicum* is steeped in a sense of given being as a creation (Pieper). Everything created communicates of the divine origin. The point is not 'aesthetic theodicy' in, say, Nietzsche's sense, but the opening of a divine aesthetics in a more richly ontological and metaphysical sense (Balthasar). Figuring is not closed to transfiguring. Take this example of horizontal analogy suggestive of metaxological intermediation with what exceeds the horizontal: the analogies of being between generations in becoming. Think of generational analogies in the familial inheritance, say, of facial features. Behold here in the face of the living child the uncanny likeness of the dead (p. 89) grandfather in the faded photo there. Family resemblances recur over generations and reveal an interplay of like and unlike, the presence of one in the other (Wittgenstein's critique of the so-called essentialist fallacy is really a critique of a misleading fixation on univocity). And yet there is more than mere equivocity, granting that there is much equivocity. The pluralism is a plurivocity, if there is interplay of like and unlike. The analogy of family generation shows plurivocity that is not simply univocal or equivocal, that is both and yet neither. Nor is it dialectical in the Hegelian sense explained above. If family resemblance were to be called analogical, it might be given a metaxological twist. In the image of the parent(s), or the ancestors, we can fix no first One on the horizontal plane. This plane is an open between.

But the openness of the between is not just a being flanked by two forms of indefiniteness—the indefiniteness of the original and the end. A merely indefinite beginning begets nothing. A merely indefinite end completes nothing. And yet it is a mysterious love that is in passage between the generations: in each, beyond each, between each, and never just in one alone. Something of a surplus of secret goodness, an *incognito* generosity, is figured, is incarnated in the spread of finite generations. Do we have to ponder an origin that is overdeterminate: more than the univocity of the determinate, more the equivocity of the indefinite, and more the self-determining of immanent dialectic? On the boundary of the hyperbolic, does the porosity of the between point to this?

Art gets great play in postmodernism but the religious is the orphan without a proper name, or the grieving widow of a great one. Alert to porosity between religion and philosophy, post-dialectical reason takes the desolate widow and orphan into new care. This is not just the aesthetic play of possibility, and there is return of the ethical but there is also more. We need to transcend the oscillation of determinacy and indeterminacy; transcend not towards the ethical confined to our terms of self-determination but rather to the religious between. The religious between communicates something of the overdeterminacy of given being and its giving source that is even yet more hyperbolic than given being—*semper maior*. This is not to reinstate a dualism of immanence and transcendence but to ask if there are hyperboles of being in immanence that cannot be accounted for in entirely immanent terms and that raise mindfulness of what transcends immanence (see Desmond 2008, ch. 6). In this middle space between the hyperbolic in immanence and the eminence of the divine superior lies the hyperbolic dissimilitude par excellence. The hyperboles of being are ontological ‘places’ which call out for a renewal of analogical thinking—in a metaxological mode. Granting the analogies of the immanent plane, there is no reason why analogical thinking might not wonder about likeness and unlikeness on the vertical plane.

Perhaps, then, it is the *vocation* of reason rather than the fate to verge on the hyperbolic in being, and in the metaxological space between philosophy and religion. I conclude with a pagan example and a Christian one. To the first: consider how Plato speaks both of the sun as an analogy with the good, and also the relation of the source and its offspring. The issue here is not one of a finite being or causality, but with the bringing to be of the determinately finite and intelligible, and indeed good. Witness this striking togetherness of the analogy of origination and something hyperbolic (see Desmond (p. 90) 2012, ch. 9). Socrates refuses to give a direct univocal account of the good in itself and offers the figure of the offspring of the good (*ekgonos te tou agathou*). The offspring is one most nearly made in the likeness of the good (Plato, *Republic* 506e). He refers to the story of the father (*patēr*) but postpones this to another occasion (506e). (In his *Metaphysics* (1021a15–27) Aristotle discusses three types of relation, one of which is producer/product. The father/son is the paradigm of this relation (1021a24–25)). Generational analogy is invoked: the offspring of the good stands in analogy (*analogon*, 508c) with the good itself. The non-identity in likeness is stressed (508a–b, 509a) reminding us of the excessive difference of the good itself, the famous *epekeina tēs ousias* (509b9). Glaucon exclaims in response (509c1–2): ‘By Apollo, a daimonic hyperbole (*daimonias huperbolēs*)!’. What is daimonic

refers us to a between space, a *metaxu* between mortals and divinity. Plato leads us upwards and into the *metaxu* between mortals and divinities, there ventures boldly an iconic saying about the ultimate, but this iconic saying relativizes the ultimacy of our saying without relativizing the ultimate. This is very true to what one might call the creative equivocity of true analogical thinking.

The Christian example: if Aquinas's *agens analogicum* helps us some way to thinking the togetherness of transcendence and immanence, analogical agency is more than our merely linguistic attribution. It is not that God is an agent on analogy with some finite cause. Something about the becausing of God is analogical, issuing in analogical likeness and unlikeness. Becausing is a causing to be. The creation of the different is here named, but with a difference that is not a dualistic opposition, but in some community between itself and the endowing origin. By contrast, a univocal cause would give rise to an effect the same as itself. God's causing would be the same again, a kind of ontological cloning. The concept of *causa sui* belongs in this conceptual space. That c*causa sui* was very important for Spinoza and Hegel is not unconnected with the diverse workings of the univocal sense in their thinking. This might not be immediately evident with Hegel. Nevertheless, Hegel's God in creating gives rise to God again—not unlike a univocal cause, creation is God's self-creation. Hegel's God is self-cloning. Hidden in these divine dialectics is the speculative autism of the spirit. Analogical causation might be said, by contrast, to create the finite other not as a self-othering, but through the interplay of likeness and unlikeness it releases the created other into its own being for itself, a being which is yet also in relation to God, as ultimate origin of all relations of communication between creation and Godself.

How would analogical causation differ from equivocal causation, if divine unlikeness is always more and obviates any reduction to sameness? One could say that equivocal causation would be the production of the different as effect which had *no relation* to the effecting cause. But without any such relation, this would mean that the effect would be no effect. Thus a sheerly equivocal causation seems to lack intelligibility since it connects nothing with nothing, and something could not come to be. There would be no relation of source and outcome, hence no outcome. If nothing would connect, there would be nothing, hence no creation, and no causing to be. The ultimate 'outcome' is no outcome in such equivocal causation; it would not be the world of flux but an inversion (p. 91) into an absolutely unintelligible univocity, that is to say, a frozen motionless sameness impossible to distinguish from nothing.

Of course, 'causation' in modern thought has become so univocalized as to be robbed of the ontological resonances of original creating. Hence it is preferable to speak of analogical origination. Original creating would be the effecting of what is both same and other, always granting an irreducible transcendence to God as the origin. Creation is a giving to be, a bringing to be by divine art in which what is brought to be is other to the giving source. And yet the finite creation is in being as related to the giving source, and shows some likeness to it, in so far as it is at all. The likeness has something to do with the 'why' of the creating, its be-cause, namely, to communicate the good of 'to be'. What is the be-

cause of bringing to be? No more in Aquinas than in Plato can we avoid invoking the *hyperbolic goodness* of the ultimate origin. One thinks of how, analogous to being at all through generational inheritance, there is a secret love of being that is passed from generation to generation. No finite generation possesses this love of the 'to be', and yet all diversely participate in it. The reason of coming to be is nothing more than the good of the original and ultimate be-cause, nothing more than that it is good to be. This good of the 'to be' is what both the origin and the created share, because the origin shares it by the releasing giving that is creating. The created is given a share in, participates in this ultimate good of the 'to be'.

God is not an erotic absolute (like Hegel's) but an agapeic origin, in giving being to be out of the surplus plenitude of self-exceeding generosity. There is a divine fullness always already more than all finite realizations, a fullness that gives finiteness from this agapeic surplus that creatively endows finite beings other than itself. One recalls Paul's great hymn to love, *agape*, along whose hyperbolic way (ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν, 1 Cor 12; 31) we are enjoined to go, beyond the best of other great gifts, and even now as we see things in enigma (ἐν αἰνίγματι, 1Cor 13; 12). In thinking about analogy metaxologically, the erotics of generation is exceeded by the agapeics of divine origination. Perhaps the vocation of reason is to ponder this exceeding. Perhaps it is to grant anew the porosity of philosophy and religion, closed in the interim of univocalizing modernity, now itself coming to a close. In the interim of new time, the secret enigma of being, the mysterious love of the divine, passes beyond that closure.

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Creation and Salvation

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This chapter offers an overview of Catholic teaching on the relationship between creation and salvation. It begins by affirming the centrality to Christian theology of a fully Trinitarian vision of creation. Such a vision also involves a clearly articulated account of God's non-competitive relation to the world. The same account governs both an account of the Creator–creation relation and the relationship between the two natures of Christ. Catholic accounts of Christ's work and the nature of salvation are steeped in the ritualistic and symbolic imagery of second-temple Judaism, and sustain—in the face of the sheer mystery of divine action—a multiplicity of metaphorical languages. The chapter ends by comparing the approaches of Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner as symptomatic of key debates in recent Catholic soteriology.

Keywords: creation, God, salvation, soteriology, temple, sacrifice, von Balthasar, Rahner

Creation

IT is no surprise that the opening chapters of Genesis stimulate the religious response of Jews and Christians to the world's existence, a response that is inseparably imaginative and philosophical. Robert Alter writes of the impact of the opening chapter of Genesis on the Jewish religious imagination: 'the stark initiating act of creation through divine speech from formlessness, chaos, nothingness (*tohu-bohu*) lingers … as a measure of the absoluteness of God's power and also as a looming perspective on the contingency of all human existence and the frailty of all human exercises of knowledge and power' (Alter and Kermode 1990: 31). The Christian imagination too comes to share this sense of a radically contingent creation that need not have been and that might (will?) cease to be, a vertiginous experience strikingly expressed by Cardinal de Bérulle, the seventeenth-century founder of the French Oratory, in an address to devout religious:

> We are a nothing that tends towards nothing, that seeks nothing, that is concerned with nothing, that is content with nothing, that fills itself with nothing, and that in the end ruins and destroys itself for nothing.

(Bérulle 1997: 26)

But if the cardinal enjoyed conveying a *frisson* of metaphysical horror to Parisian nuns, he believed no less strongly that the frailty of our nature pressing towards metaphysical dissolution is deflected by God towards beatitude. He agreed with Aquinas that 'the most wonderful thing of all is that earthly and corruptible man may be promoted to the possession of spiritual and heavenly things' (Aquinas, *Exp. sup. Job* 37). How do frail human beings, the product of ovum and sperm, destined to return to cosmic dust, come to be at all, and come to be finally in God? The doctrines of creation and salvation address this question, and they cannot be separated from one another because they are about the way the world is in relation to God (creation), the way humans come to be (p. 98) fulfilled in relation to God (salvation), and the way God acts to bring us and the world to beatitude (resurrection). For Catholic theology, creation is a relation that leads to resurrection through the person of Jesus Christ and his deeds.

Two classic texts illustrate ways in which the doctrines of creation and salvation flow into one another. The first reports the inaugural religious experience of the twelve-year old Charles de Condren, later to be the saintly co-founder with Bérulle of the French Oratory:

> when studying one day [he] was suddenly aware of his mind being encompassed with a wonderful light, in the radiance of which the divine Majesty appeared to him so immense and so infinite that it seemed to him that this One Pure Being alone ought to subsist, and that all the universe should be destroyed for his Glory …
>
> For being in the abyss of his nothingness before the divine holiness and desiring ardently to be sacrificed for his glory, he was suddenly filled with a particular joy in seeing that the Son of God was ever the victim of the Father … He recognised that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the fulfilling of the zeal of all who themselves desired their immolation, but who were incapable worthily of honouring God by their sacrifice. That to present to the Father the Son who died, was to praise in infinity the divine holiness, justice, all-sufficiency, and in a word his whole infinity, acknowledging before the Father eternal that not only the universe but he himself merited destruction before him; and he saw that only the unique sacrifice of Jesus Christ was worthy of God.
>
> (Bremond 1936: 294–295)

This account of the holiness of God, the contingency of things (the striking picture of a child standing in 'an abyss of nothingness') and the necessity of sacrificial union with Christ as a way of bridging the ontological chasm between God and the world, has almost certainly been amplified by the adult Condren in the light of his later spiritual teachings. But that an intelligent and devout child, endowed with sensitivity to spiritual matters and exposed to a catechesis about the creation's contingency and a sacrificial account of the Eucharist, should feel things in this way is certainly conceivable. The young Condren experienced the insight that Klein expresses more abstractly: 'Christianity insists that the

whole that is the world stands before that which is not itself, the revelation of which reveals this self as still incomplete' (Klein 2007: 57). What is the world for, the young Condren wonders, if not to immolate itself before the infinite holiness of God? We climb out of nothingness to beatitude via the Cross, he senses. Here Thomist metaphysics and a spirituality of sacrificial atonement meet and embrace.

The second passage is from Gerard Manley Hopkins's retreat notes in 1880 which see creation and sacrifice as jointly springing from a primal movement within the Triune God. Written by a Jesuit who would have hesitated to call himself a theologian, it is one of the finest primary theological texts in English:

> The first intention then of God outside himself or, as they say, ad extra, outwards, the first outstress of God's power was Christ; and we must believe that the next was (p. 99) the Blessed Virgin. Why did the Son of God go forth from the Father not only in the eternal and intrinsic procession of the Trinity but also by an extrinsic and less than eternal, let us say aeonian one? To give God glory and that by sacrifice, sacrifice offered in the barren wilderness outside of God, as the children of Israel were led into the wilderness to offer sacrifice. This sacrifice and this outward procession is a consequence and shadow of the procession of the Trinity, from which mystery sacrifice takes its rise. But of this I do not mean to write here. It is as if the blissful agony or stress of selving in God had forced out drops of sweat or blood, which drops were the world, or as if the lights lit at the festival of the 'peaceful Trinity' through some little cranny striking out lit up into being one 'cleave' out of the world of possible creatures. The sacrifice would be the Eucharist, and that the victim might be truly victim like, like motionless, helpless or lifeless, it must be in matter.
>
> (Hopkins 1986: 288–289)

Hopkins imagines an 'outstress' within God that impels God outwards; later he comes back to this theme and describes it as 'the blissful agony or stress of selving in God'. It is said to issue in Christ, the focus of divine life even 'before' there is a creation and a Blessed Virgin to give him flesh. This is Barthian teaching a century before the great Calvinist taught that, in Jenson's words, 'the historical event of Jesus' existence is the eternal event of the life of God' (Jenson 1969: 73): the intrinsic life of God is Christic. Later, this same 'stress of selving' forces out from the body of God 'drops of sweat or blood', identified by Hopkins as the actual creation, one choice ('one cleave') out of many possible worlds. The original feature here is that Hopkins describes the creation in ways that evoke Gethsemane, the place of Christ's *agonia* where drops of sweat and blood are forced out of the body of Christ as he faces his death (Luke 22:44). We are to see the 'blissful agony' by which the world flows from the 'selving' of God as analogous to that of Christ in Gethsemane when sweat and blood flow from him: the world is 'pressed' from God as sweat and blood are pressed from the body of Christ. Although he may be guided by Ignatius Loyola's direction in the *Contemplatio* of the *Spiritual Exercises* to contemplate God labouring 'in the heavens, elements, plants, fruits, cattle, etc., giving them be-

ing, preserving them, giving them vegetation and sensation, etc.,' to see creation as grounded in an outworking of God's being comparable to Gethsemane seems to be original to Hopkins.

Hopkins grasped that the related dimensions of creation, Incarnation, and sacrificial atonement spring from the same 'stress of selving in God'. He is, of course, speaking analogically by applying this phrase to God: just as creatures are governed by the impulse in their nature by which they fulfil themselves, so God is subject to an intrinsic 'stress' from within that leads outwards to creation, sacrifice, and the giving of glory in the wilderness outside God. This impulse outwards—we do not know what it is, but we might think of it as his 'selving' or *esse* proper to the divine nature—is the foundational movement that lies behind the existence of everything. The moments of creation and salvation are the consequence of something happening within the Triune God: we may glimpse, live, and *be* the effect of that divine movement, but believe no theologian who claims to tell you what it is because the mode of God's being is not given to us to know.

(p. 100) Before we leave Hopkins's meditation, we should note the central place which sacrifice, the 'consequence and shadow' of the Triune life, occupies in this meditation. What unfolds outwards in time and space is the actuality of God conveyed as creator of the world and the world's redemptive self-gift. The internal procession of the Son, extended for the glory of the Father, is the *ratio et causa* ('reason for and cause of') the atoning sacrifice on Golgotha. It is interesting to note that seven years after Hopkins meditated in this way, the German Catholic theologian Matthias Scheeben wrote in remarkably similar terms about the Trinitarian roots of Christ's sacrifice: '[We] can present Christ's sacrifice in the shedding of His blood to the last drop as the highest expression of the Trinitarian relations and the most perfect vehicle of their extension to the outer world … Thus the idea of Christ's sacrifice thrusts its roots deep into the abyss of the Trinity' (Scheeben 1947: 445–446). With insights like these in the late nineteenth century, Catholic theology knew before Barth that Trinitarian theology is inseparable from the Paschal Mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.

These themes from Hopkins and Scheeben point us to a *cantus firmus*—an underlying melody—in the Catholic doctrine of creation, explored by Bonaventure, Albert the Great, and Aquinas, that the conditions of God making the world and saving it reside in the Triune dynamic of the divine nature (Emery 2003: 33–70). The Catholic tradition framed magisterially by Aquinas is clear that you cannot have a proper understanding of creation and salvation without a doctrine of the Trinity. In relation to salvation, the point is obvious: the unsurpassable *self*-gift of God comes to us in Word and Spirit, the fruits of understanding and love within the Godhead. But creation, too, requires the knowledge of the procession of the divine persons if it is to be properly understood (Emery 2005: 60). In his commentary on Peter Abelard's *Sentences*, Aquinas treats the movements of knowledge and love within God as the *origin, principle, and exemplar* of the procession of created things from God in their diversity:

> the going out of the persons in the unity of essence (*exitus personarum in unitate essentiae*) is the cause of the going out of creatures in the diversity of essence' (*exitus creaturum in essentiae diversitate*) (I *Sent*. d.2, *divisio textus*). 'The eternal processions [of the persons in God] are the cause and reason (*causa et ratio*) of the production of creatures
>
> (I *Sent*. d.14 q.1, a.1).

Put crisply, the *immanent* actions within God (knowledge and love) are the conditions of the *external, transitive* actions outside God that constitute the creation. Aquinas sees an aesthetic fittingness in the agency of Word and Spirit in the work of creation (*exitus*) and in the work of salvation (*reditus*). (Remember that, for Aquinas, God—and for him it is always the Triune God who is being considered both philosophically and in response to revelation—is known in his *works*.) The processions of Word and Spirit in God which Aquinas thinks are the condition of there being a creation at all, are fittingly the agents through whose *missiones ad extra* we are brought to completion. The end flows from the beginning:

(p. 101)

> Just as the procession of persons is the reason of the production of creatures by the first principle, so too this same procession is the reason for the return of creatures to their end, since, just as we have been created by the Son and the Holy Spirit, so too it is by them that we are united to our ultimate end.
>
> (I *Sent.* d.13 q.2 a.2)

O'Brien is right to insist that Aquinas does not intend the doctrine of creation to be 'the basis of a natural theology, much less of a natural religion'. It is a mistake to treat creation as a 'separate form of revelation, a natural revelation'. For Aquinas, O'Brien says, 'Creation is part of God's *unitary* revelation consummated in Jesus Christ. For revelation is a communication by which God draws men into the communion of charity; creation is revelatory as the basis of that personal communion (O'Brien 1974: 131). Echoes here, surely, of Karl Barth's striking phrase, 'Creation is grace', a statement before which he recommends that we pause 'in reverence, fear and gratitude' (Barth 1949: 54) because creation is the external dimension of God's saving covenant. The work of creation, then, is not a preliminary scene-setting in which an eventually saving drama will be enacted, but an integral dimension of the divine self-giving that is illuminated, advanced, and effected through God's action in Israel, Christ, and the Church. Too often, the theology of creation is overshadowed by powerful metaphors of soteriology that dramatize the human condition.

The dominance within our Western culture of non-Trinitarian models of creation intent on establishing or denying 'the fingerprints of God' in the first milliseconds of the Big Bang (Stephen Hawking's phrase), shows how poorly the central Christian tradition has been articulated. In spite of its best sources, the Western Catholic tradition has failed to con-

vey to its surrounding world the insight that the natural order is constantly under God's action in a dependent participation in God and that it is the work of the Triune God. The tendency towards deism, as Orthodox theologians point out, may be indigenous to theological approaches which relegate the role of the Holy Spirit to a Christological postscript rather than as the very condition of divine life *ad extra*. In addition, with the emergence of scientific approaches in the early modern period, there developed a repeated concentration on creation as a protological conception—what takes place 'at the beginning of things'—rather than as the condition of the whole natural order sustained by divine action.

In the culture spawned by Western Christianity, a culturally influential deism is the default position, at times indistinguishable from a loosely conceived atheism. Michael Buckley's thesis about the roots of modern atheism has much to commend it: the problems started at the emergence of modern science in the seventeenth century when theologians no longer took Christ as central to the definition of 'God'; instead, attention focused on the observed order of the world's design as the proof of God and the primary, and foundational revelatory locus of God ceases to be the person of Jesus Christ. Moreover, central aspects of Christian faith (Christ, the Scriptures, revelation, the witness offered in religious experience, the sacramental life of the Church) were consigned to a dark corner in order to offer instead a spare, and ultimately deeply problematic, (p. 102) apologetic for God's existence: *if the world exists and is ordered, there must be a God who started it*.

Hence, says Buckley, 'the origin of modern atheism in the intellectual culture of the West lies thus with the self-alienation of religion itself' (Buckley 1987: 363). The cultural death of theism, we might say, was an inside job, and the fingerprints of theologians are all over the corpse of the dead God. Alasdair MacIntyre puts it crisply: 'The God in whom the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came to disbelieve had been invented only in the seventeenth century' (MacIntyre and Ricoeur 1969: 14). The mistakes of the past, however, are not easily rectified; they can only be identified and 'unsaid' by later generations. The unsaying may begin by recalling that Aquinas places the treatise on creation, not after his consideration of what we may know and say about *de deo uno* from God's effects (after *ST* I. 26), but after he has established a distinction of persons in *de deo trino*, persons in God (after *ST* I.43). This enables him to secure the status of creation as the object of divine goodness springing from the *Triune* life. 'This is why the study of creation and salvation must be preceded by a prior study of God and his immanent life', Emery says (Emery 2003: 131). Aquinas's argument is that if in God there is a *Word*, an exuberant expressiveness proper to the divine nature, and if there is also *Love*, bountiful goodness, and self-gift, hypostatically realized, then God's rich, generative *esse* precludes want or need, and the creation takes place not because it is needed in order to fill a vacuum, but solely out of the free overflowing of divine love:

> The fact of saying that God made all things by his Word excludes the error of those who say that God produced things by necessity. When we say that in him there is a procession of Love, we show that God produced creatures not because he needed

> them, not because of any other extrinsic reason, but on account of the love of his own goodness.
>
> (*ST* 1, q. 32, a. 1, ad3)

Hence Persson can say that for Aquinas 'there is no necessary procession of things from God, and no other cause of the existence of creation than God's free and sovereign will' (Persson 1970: 135). For Aquinas, the Triune character of God is the guarantee that the creation does not remedy a lack in God or to fill up a hole in being: nothing *needs* to be added, nor *can* anything be added, to the *ipsum esse*, the actuality, which God is. God's creation of the world, then, is prompted 'not for any advantage but out of sheer goodness', taking place 'only to communicate his perfection, which is his goodness' (*ST* 1, q. 44, a. 4). The argument is given modern currency by von Balthasar:

> If within God's identity, there is an Other, who at the same time is the image of the Father and thus the archetype of all that can be created; if, within this identity, there is a Spirit, who is the free, superabundant love of the 'One' and of the 'Other', then both the otherness of creation which is modelled on the archetypal otherness within God, and its sheer existence, which it owes to the intradivine liberality, are brought into a positive relationship to God. Such a relationship is beyond (p. 103) the imagination of any non-Christian religion (including Judaism and Islam), for wherever God (even in the person of Yahweh or Allah) can only be the One, it remains impossible to discover any satisfactory explanation of the Other
>
> (von Balthasar 2004: 180–181)

For Aquinas, God is *ipsum esse* ('Being itself'). Viewed dynamically and analogically in the light of God's action towards us, the *esse* which God is expressive and unitive:

- God's *esse* is unoriginate, dependent on and constituted by none other, and so God is *Father*;
- God's *esse* is self-expressive: 'the Word is the *fruit* of the knowledge sown by the Father' (Emery 2007: 193). 'The Son of God is the word and conception of God understanding himself' (*CG*, IV, 12) and so God is *Word*;
- God's *esse* is self-bestowal, the impulse of charity, and so God is *Spirit*.

Because God is simple and full actuality, these movements mark no multiplicity, no pluralism, as though divine simplicity has been divided into constitutive parts; instead, there is the abundance of rich, expressive *esse*, the free circulation of being, articulation and love within God, in which everything in God—the intransitive acts of being, expressiveness, and self-gift proper to the divine nature—*is* God. Aquinas rescues the Christian Trinity from tritheism:

> In God, to be, to know, and to love are identical. God existing in his own natural being [Father], God existing in his intellect [Son] and God existing in his love [Spirit] are one, yet each of them is subsistent

(Aquinas, *Compendium Theologiae* 50).

Aquinas's core insight in relating creation to the Triune life of God is surely this: as an originating act (the meaning of the phrase *ex nihilo*) that constitutes a non-divine order dependent on God, creation has more in common with the movements by which *something arises in God through knowledge and will issuing in hypostatic distinctiveness* than it has with anything within the operation of the created order. Creation, after all, is neither construction nor furnishing nor alteration, but 'causing to be'—a category about which we have the same degree of learned ignorance as about the mode of the Triune life. Sokolowski is right to say that 'the act of creation cannot be understood in terms of any action or any relationship that exists in the world' (Sokolowski 1982: 32), but it might have a connection with the action and relationship that exists in God and this is what Aquinas is getting at. With what else is creation to be compared, if not with the movements of understanding and will in God that generate expressiveness and gift within the divine simplicity?

The image of a craftsman designing and making thing is, of course, frequently used by Aquinas to show that God's understanding and will, like the craftsman's thought and application, operate in the external act of divine power (*ST* I, q. 45, a. 6). But this metaphor (p. 104) gives way to a properly conceived analogy that holds, in stereoscopic view, on the one hand *persons in God* and, on the other, *creatures in God*. This Thomist tradition sees the otherness of the creation as the created effect, the extension *ad extra*, of richness within the divine life and it understands the existence of creaturely agents, capable of free self-determination, to be grounded in the free circulation of being, love, and response within God. Because of the generativity proper to God which Rowan Williams characterizes as 'a giving birth to what is utterly continuous ('consubstantial') and utterly other (because distinguished only by relation, not by any chance feature), both wholly drawn from the generator's substance and wholly a free re-presentation, re-realization, of the generator's life', the world is held in the movements of truth and love proper to God. (Williams 2005: 160–161). The creation is in 'deep God,' intrinsically connected to divine truth and love. Even when created freedom damages itself through sin, the flow of self-giving grace is never impaired.

For Aquinas, the initial creation of a being and its continued existence are one act of continuous creation. For him, creation in the creature 'is only a certain relation to the Creator as to the principle of its being' (*ST* I, q. 45, a. 3); 'creation is really nothing other than a relation of the creature to the Creator together with a beginning of existence' (*De Pot.*, q.3, a. 3, co.). The creation is a relation to God, a point well expressed by Kathryn Tanner:

> Non-divine being must be talked about as always and in every respect *constituted by*, and therefore *nothing apart from*, an immediate relation with the founding agency of God … created being becomes what it is and this all the more fully, not by way of separation or neutrality from God, but within the intimacy of a relationship to divinity as its total ground

(Tanner 1988: 84–85)

The metaphysical category of relation, applied both within the divine life and to God's creation of the world, is a central feature of how Pseudo-Dionysius and Aquinas view creation: 'Unaffected in himself, God gives reality to creatures through a relation which in no way influences his own nature but *which causes creatures radically and totally, exclusively and exhaustively*' (O'Rourke 1992: 221, emphasis added).

God relates to things differently from every other agent because the divine action is not one among other agents, but is the condition of there being creaturely agency at all. In Tanner's elegant phrase, God 'differs differently'. A simple comparison may be helpful: my father's relation to me is different from God's relation to me because my father's seed and his fatherly care contribute *features* of my personal identity; but God's relation to me is not a contingent feature of me that might or might not be there, it *is* me. In a wider perspective: God's relation to the world is not something in the world—it *is* the world. God's action in causing creaturely *esse* is not one of the events within the system of creaturely causes and relations that the world is; this causing action *is* the world. In passing, we should note the important analogy with how 'person' is to be understood in Trinitarian theology: the Father's relation to the Word *is* the Word because person in God is 'subsistent relation', and creation, analogously, is 'dependent relation'.

(p. 105) The fact that the world has a fully intelligible, structured coherence that does not obviously bespeak dependence on a creator is important because God creates the world in such a way that God's action is not a fact *in* the world alongside other causes or facts. 'Belief in creation is not simply belief in a fact or an item of information that is added to all the other things we know and hold as true' (Sokolowski 1990: 188). What then does it express?

Pause for a moment to examine the word 'and' in the phrase 'God and the world'. In its formal structure, the phrase resembles 'John and Rebecca': it seems to conjoin two items within the one category, the grammatical structure suggesting that God can be added to, or considered alongside, the world, like peas of perhaps different sizes within the one ontological pod. But this is a deception created by our grammar: according to the Scholastic tag, *Deus non est in aliquo genere* (*SG* I, 25), God is not in a genus, a category of things. The word 'God' can be used in a sentence alongside words designating things, but that does not mean that God is in the same category as those things. Grammar is not an unerring guide to ontology—indeed, some confusions are created by the way we speak. If we follow Aquinas on this matter, then the only proper ontological, as opposed to grammatical, analogies to the phrase 'God and the world' are 'the Father and the Word' and 'the Father and the Spirit' because Aquinas is not afraid to mirror persons-in-God and creatures-in-God and to understand the former as a *similitudo* of the latter.

For Catholic Christian theology, the word 'and' in 'God and the world' is a shorthand formula signalling dimensions of origination, dependence, participation, relatedness, divine self-gift, and revelation that Christians see in a properly understood doctrine of creation: the world depends upon, participates in, is constituted by, and awaits the climactic self-

gift of God. There is therefore a deep relatedness springing from God's communication of existence to the world, the world's receptive dependence on God, and its dynamic movement towards beatitude in God. The causal relation which God exercises towards the non-divine order is *effective* (God makes it be), *exemplary* (the pattern of its flourishing is archetypally Christic in its receptivity and responsive self-definition), and *final* (the creatures of the world actively tend towards divine goodness). The relation constituted through this triple causality *is* the world itself.

Hence, the relation of God and the world is not a passive dependence, but includes an imprinting within free creatures of a dynamic orientation towards the goodness that God is. Aquinas thinks that even non-human creatures tend towards God: simply by being themselves, they tend towards the good that is God. The existence (*esse*) of a creature, Burrell says, is a 'being towards' (*esse-ad*), 'an existing which is itself a relation to its source … the creature's *esse-ad* assures that it cannot *be* separately from its source' (Burrell 2001: 213). The relation of the creature to the creator (*esse-ad-creatorem*) is intrinsic to the reality (*esse*) of each creature—a point of considerable significance for Catholic theological anthropology because we are not a closed system, but are characterized by a dynamic openness to God that through the action of divine truth and love (Word and Spirit) in all human beings.

(p. 106) This is why an orthodox Trinitarian believer thinks of the world differently from, say, a deist Unitarian who is content to affirm an indeterminate relation by which God assembles a set of self-sustaining conditions that require no further divine presence and then leaves the theatre. But for the Trinitarian theology that lies at the heart of the Catholic perception, what begins as God's making the world *be* unfolds, advances and deepens into unsurpassable self-gift, conveyed in Christ, and sealed by the bond of the Spirit. Creation, Incarnation, and atonement, as Hopkins saw so imaginatively, belong together as related aspects within the dynamic of the one divine expressiveness. Creation only makes sense if there is resurrection.

This enables Catholic theology to foster an Aristotelian and Thomist sense that the whole of contingent reality is an active participation, an *energeia* or *actus*, through which the world has its own being, in all its proper autonomy, integrity, and worth, to the degree that it is grounded in the creative activity of God. The act of 'making the world be' is not a feature of the processes of cloud formation, the shifts of tectonic plates, or the development of brains in primates. But it is why the world, with its clouds, plates, and brains, *is*. W. H. Auden knew some good theology when he wrote:

> Precisely because He created it, God cannot be encountered in the Universe—a storm, for example, is a natural phenomenon, not as in polytheism, the wrath of Zeus—ust as when I read a poem, I do not encounter the author himself, only the words he has written which it is my job to understand
>
> (Kirsch 2005: 162).

The operation of nature is respected by the creating God who creates a world of free creatures (secondary causes or agents analogous to God's primary causality or agency). The natural order is respected in its integrity because it is the work of the creator and God does not violate the features of the world he causes to be. Sokolowski is an excellent expositor of this point:

> What is according to nature, and what reason can disclose in nature, retains its integrity before the Christian God … We must think of God as the one who can let natural necessity be maintained and let reason be left intact: that is, God is not himself a competing part of nature or a part of the world. If the incarnation could not take place without a truncation of human nature, it would mean that God was one of the natures in the world that somehow was defined by not being the other natures; it would mean that his presence in one of these other natures, human nature, would involve a conflict and a need to exclude some part of what he is united with … Only if the divine is not one of the natures in the world can the incarnation, and the salvation it achieved, occur
>
> (Sokolowski 1982: 36–38)

These points are important as we move towards considering the relation of creation to the Incarnation of the Word 'for us and for our salvation'. The central idea can be clearly stated: the rules which govern the relation between God and the world also govern the relation of the divine and human natures in Christ. (Note that 'and' here is to be understood in the light of our earlier discussion about God and the world: not a conjunction (p. 107) but a dynamic connectedness.) The point of reference for Catholic Christianity is the statement reached in the Council of Chalcedon in 451 in which Christ is said to be 'truly God and 'truly man', 'of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his humanness.' He is said to be 'recognized in two natures, *without confusion, without change, without division, without separation*; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and hypostasis'.

In this relation that Chalcedon explores, God remains God and the creation remains the creation, with neither fusion, mixture, alteration, absorption of one in the other, nor separation as though there could be creaturely action independently of God's primary causality of making the world be. The four adverbs ('*without confusion, without change, without division, without separation*') that are applied to the relation of divine and human in Christ regulate also how the broader category of divine and the non-divine are related. What is affirmed of Christ is to apply also to the creational relationship. Significantly, the adverbs are negative: they tell us what the relation is not. No over-arching positive description is available to us, either of the union of natures in Christ, or of the union of the world with God: we can say what it is not, not what it is. Peter Geach's image for this relationship is simple: 'God sustains the world as a singer sustains his/her song'.

The adverbs of Chalcedon identify an indefinable 'x' between God and the non-divine, identified negatively but not explained, and in this way, the formula preserves the distinction between the two orders of existence in their closest proximity ('hypostatic') in the Incarnate Word. In the relation God has with the world, God is not confused with the world, nor is the world's existence separable from God's making it be; neither is God altered by relating to the creation (as though this introduces a modification and a diminishment of divine transcendence. If God were modified by a relation to the world, or if the Word was changed by its union with Christ, God would be one of the things in a nexus of *relata*. In its constitutive ('hypostatic') union with the divine Word, creaturely nature retains its proper characteristics, including freedom, thought, will, emotion, susceptibility to pain, and an orientation towards physical death. The Word is not ontologically modified by its union with Christ, just as God is not altered by the relation which God has to the world.

The Incarnation is the most intense engagement of God and creation, and in this moment of intense proximity (a 'theandric union' of divine and human, the tradition says) the features of the created order are not swamped by the presence of the divine. Divine transcendence is no more undermined than human limits are transgressed. If these reflections are correct, then the conditions which make Incarnation possible are precisely the conditions operative in creation: the ontology of Incarnation is the ontology of creation. This is not a proof of the Incarnation—how could it be proved? But it is to say that in their operation, both Incarnation and creation are governed by principles which respect the transcendent character of the divine and the dependent status of the created order.

(p. 108) God does not become part of anything and so it is a mistake to think that Christ is 'composed' of a divine part and a human part as though he were a hybrid amalgam, the product of a singular divine–human fusion. Only an ontology along Chalcedonian lines can prevent the category of Incarnation from being read either as a Zeus-like metamorphosis into creaturely shape, as a mixing in which the divine absorbs the creaturely, or as a masquerade in which the divine only seems to be connected to us. The Church's Christology is guided by a non-conflictual account of the God–world relationship in which the operation of creaturely reality is a boundary, a relation ordained, sustained, and respected by God himself at that point in history when the divine Word *matters*, in all the resonances of that verb; this *mattering* is decisive for how the creation is brought into final union with God. God unites his Word with a contingent human creature, Jesus of Nazareth, so that God's love might be channelled through the human love of Christ for all, as Cyril of Alexandria taught:

> For we are all in Christ and the common personality of the human race lives again by turning unto him …Thus then the Word has dwelt through one man in all of us, so that, this one man having been established as the Son of God in all his power according to the Spirit of sanctification (Rom. 1:4), this dignity might pass into all the human race … He who is by nature the Son of God has dwelt among us. That is why we, in him, cry out, 'Abba, Father!' The Word dwells in us all, in that unique temple which he has taken to himself from among us and for our sakes, so that,

> having all human beings in himself, he may reconcile them all in one single body to the Father
>
> (Congar 1962: 182–183)

We have seen that the Catholic Christian tradition views creation, Incarnation, and salvation as a single arc of divine expressiveness and gift, originating in the processions of Word and Spirit in God, advanced by the human acts of the Word made flesh and the Holy Spirit poured into human hearts and directed towards the consummation of the resurrection. It sees God's self-gift extending through all the dimensions of creaturely life, from its beginnings through the turbulent contradictions of created freedom to its completion in the resurrection.

Salvation

Earlier, we proposed that the Catholic tradition sees an inseparable bond between creation and soteriology that is grounded in the Triune life of God, but this does not prevent the discourse suitable for soteriology from differing from that appropriate to creation: with soteriology a different semantic world and a different linguistic register are needed because the rhetoric of soteriology is designed to shift humans out of complacency into a responsive engagement with God the Saviour and his saving Son: one should not be able to sleep during an exposition of salvation. The Jewish philosopher (p. 109) Emmanuel Levinas notes, with some regret but also some relief, what he calls the ' "flat calm" which reigns in the Judaism regulated by the Law and by ritual' (Levinas 1990: 33), contrasted with the stirring dramatic tones of the Christian religion and the vigour of its key ideas of Incarnation, salvation through the death of the innocent Son of God, and the trumpet blast of Resurrection. Levinas, one suspects, would not easily have willingly responded to the *Dies Irae* of Verdi's *Requiem* and would have judged that this is how an already exuberant religion goes over the top; he may be right.

As we saw, the Catholic tradition integrates creation and salvation within an over-arching Trinitarian framework and sees the processions and missions of Word and Spirit in God as the conditions both of God's 'making' and of God's 'remaking' the world. And we pointed to a disjunction between a (measured) exposition of creation and a (dramatic) exposition of salvation because soteriology deals with how God's freedom to *love* (and this is boundless) engages the human freedom to *resist* (and we hope that this is not boundless).

Soteriology is characterized by a dramatic engagement of divine and human freedoms: God's freedom to bestow fulfilment on humans who are caught in patterns of inherited resistance to divine goodness (surely the core of the doctrine of original sin when it stops being treated as a historical event) interacts in dramatic confrontation with unstable human freedom and selfhood. The juxtaposition of the helplessness of humanity and the power of divine mercy needs to be powerfully conveyed: endemic resistance to God culminating in the horror of Golgotha is acted out and laid upon the sin-bearing Son, only to be answered by divine non-violence; victory is achieved over rebellious spiritual powers that

have held humanity captive (‘the last enemy to be destroyed is death’: 1 Cor. 15:26); Mythical personifications prowl and confront one another: sin holds humanity captive; demonic forces have to be overcome; the power of evil is to be broken.

Sin, death, estrangement, and evil (‘the mystery of iniquity’: 2 Thess. 2:7) are real and enigmatic surds with which we wrestle and which are resolved only by God. Our descriptions of them have to be figurative and mythical because only language of this semantic order captures our inarticulacy when we deal with them. It is no surprise that it is impossible adequately to translate this jagged discourse into sober, non-figurative, non-mythical categories that can be aligned easily with systems of more controlled thought. And as we will see with von Balthasar’s writings, the issues still remain in the modern age.

The Jewish and Christian Scriptures present the interaction of God’s ‘yes’ and the human ‘no’ as always dramatic because God and humans consistently act in character, both at Sinai when an idolatrous Golden Calf is built by the Israelites as Moses enters God’s presence on their behalf to receive the life-giving Torah, and on Golgotha, where the Son of God, offering himself for sinners, is nailed to a malefactor’s cross and bears the biblical curse (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). Golgotha is a more troubling sign of the turbulences of our humanity than is the Garden of Eden because Golgotha tells us that when we are confronted by the deepest level of divine closeness, we crucify the messenger who is himself the message (Word) of God.

(p. 110) The disarrangement of thought and life caused by the death of the Messiah is conveyed through the deployment of metaphor and dramatic imagination applied to the enigma of the Incarnate Word of God, ‘one of the Trinity suffered in the flesh’ as the Scythian monks wrote in the early sixth century and the Second Council of Constantinople proclaimed in 681. The ‘truth itself’ is the Incarnate Word whose appearance among us sets the metaphors ‘flurrying’ because nothing in advance prepares us for this mode of divine presence embedded within human history, malice, and mortality, and focused on the destiny of Jesus of Nazareth. Here, we are ‘circling round the centre of the drama in which God and man are involved’ (von Balthasar 1994: 266). Although the Jewish Scriptures are constant in their insistence on the closeness of the transcendent God to Israel, everything changes as the idea of the sin-bearing Son, Lord, and Messiah, scandalously crucified for acting with divine authority in relation to Israel, forces those Jews who trust their lives to him to recast their inherited account of God’s purposes in the light of the Cross and his eventual resurrection.

And so the primary interpretative work that bestows meaning on the Cross is exegetical, reading the Jewish Scriptures in the light of Christ’s death, in which the words of the Scriptures are pressed to illuminate the Word made mortal flesh. Augustine’s tag, *novum testamentumn in vetere latet, vetus in novo patet*, gets it right: the new covenant is hidden in the old, and the old is made clear in the new. Themes from the Jewish Scriptures are transposed into accounts of the history of Jesus and they pervade the newly minted Christian Scriptures. In a very important sense, the New Testament is the last chapter, the summation, of the Old Testament that decisively alters how the earlier parts are read.

Creation and Salvation

The Christian reading of the Scriptures moves stereoscopically between the Word made flesh and the Words of the sacred writings. When the Suffering Servant Song of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is read during the Good Friday liturgy, does anyone *not* see the face of Christ in this harrowing biblical icon? The biblical texts and Christ become mutually illuminated.

When the Jewish Scriptures are reread in the light of Christ, and Christ is read in the light of these writings, then the liturgy brings about the return of Christ who has been lost from view, a moment of representation of the Lord who died on the Cross. The French Jesuit Michel de Certeau regards the theme of 'loss' as central to the understanding of the origins and continued character of the Church:

> Christianity was founded upon *the loss of a body*, the loss of the body of Jesus Christ, compounded with the loss of the 'body' of Israel, of a 'nation' and its genealogy. A founding disappearance indeed …The Christian word takes on 'Catholic' (universal) and "Pentecostal" (spiritual) form only when it is separated from its ethnic origin and a certain heredity
>
> (de Certeau 1992: 81).

He goes on to argue that this 'initial privation' of the body of Christ 'goes on producing institutions and discourses that are the effects of, and substitutes for, that absence: multiple ecclesiastical bodies, doctrinal bodies, and so on'. How, he asks, 'can a body be made from the word?' The body, of course, that is made is the body of the Church, mediated by the body of Christ in the Eucharist that makes present the body of the atoning Saviour (p. 111) on the Cross. This imaginative insight takes us into the ecclesial context in which the earliest Christian communities developed the approaches to Christ's death and resurrection that lay the foundation of all subsequent Christian narratives of salvation. Three Jewish women grieving by Christ's tomb on Easter Sunday are told by an angel, 'He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him' (Mark 16:6). The women and those who also come to believe in Christ's resurrection lose not only the body of Christ: though Jewish, they come to lose their place within the body of Israel as their belief in Christ's resurrection comes to be incompatible with the development of Torah-centred faith in Pharisaic and Rabbinic Judaism. They will be eventually excluded from membership of the body of Israel as Israel consolidates the corpus of oral Torah (eventually becoming the Mishnah and Talmud) that comes to replace the Temple (destroyed in 70 CE) at the centre of Jewish life. Loss, absence, and exclusion from Israel are the obverse of the religious creativity that bursts forth from this dynamic Jewish sect that becomes Christianity.

Because the body of Christ is lost in the resurrection, de Certeau suggests, the early believers in Christ are pressed to recover, find, construct a body that will be the focus of their newly emerging religious identity. In one of the great creative moments of self-definition in world religion, this community of Jews establishes the conditions of its survival by creating another body, the body of the Church, that is configured as the spiritual body of the physically risen Christ.

Like the rabbis around them, they transform their own corpus of oral teaching into a normative set of foundational documents (the New Testament). No longer needing the rituals of the Temple because Christ himself is now their Temple (John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:16), they construct their life as a body of believers around a *baptismal ritual* that they interpret as a symbolic immersion into Christ's death (Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13) and an *atonement ritual* centred on sharing in the body and blood of Christ which he offered to God on the Cross. Within a few decades of Christ's death, Paul can write: 'the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Cor. 10:16–17).

From this perspective, the Church is constituted by its ritual participation in Christ's body as it undergoes death and resurrection. Christ's resurrection, far from signalling his disappearance, is how his body is restored as the body of believers and the eucharistic sign, both of which are *Corpus verum Christi* ('the true body of Christ'). It becomes present to the whole of sinful humanity, and so through the eucharistic life of the Church, Catholic believers hold that they are really in touch with the body of Christ that was offered to God for their sins. In this transformation, Christ's body is, as it were, 'extended' to become the body of sinful and redeemed humanity; sinners are drawn into this bodily centre and healed and restored.

The subsequent Catholic concentration on the sacramental enactment of Christ's presence flows from the sense that both the Church and its Eucharist are modes in which the (absent) body of Christ comes to be present. Both Church and Eucharist are (p. 112) *Corpus Christi*; in Catholic life they are the efficacious modes (sacraments) in which sinners have access to the crucified and sin-bearing body of Christ that God raises from the dead. (Hence the often clumsy, but profound, talk by Catholics about the 'real presence' of Christ in the modes of bread and wine, and the radical power of Paul's characterization of the Christian as being now 'in' Christ, with all the resonances that might flow from this little preposition.) If de Certeau is right, the Catholic tradition fosters a mysticism about how Christ's body becomes the body of redeemed sinners and the locus of their salvation —themes which surface dramatically in baroque Catholicism's devotion to the Sacred Heart which Karl Rahner, a theologian often accused of offering a weakened soteriology, interprets in these terms:

> Our Lord's love enters into the history of this sinful world and wins its victory by enduring unto death the sin of the world and his own rejection by sinful men. All this outpouring of love is a revelation of his Heart … The divine love of the Eternal Word has become incarnate in the human love of Christ, has fashioned itself a place in history and cast for itself an unmistakable role in the sinful world; and thereby it has guaranteed that love, and not righteous anger, is God's first and last message to the world
>
> (Rahner 1958: 146–147).

The work of creative interpretation that impelled the earliest group of Messianic Jews to develop such ideas extends also to the way in which they were pressed to reach an understanding of how the crucifixion of Christ as a blasphemer and political criminal could have a saving purpose intended by God. What significance does his death have? In a creative interpretation decisive for later Christianity, these Jewish thinkers came to understand that the events on the Mount of Calvary should be understood in the light of the priestly atoning ritual on the Mount of the Temple. The implications of this insight will reverberate through all subsequent Catholic Christian life which will be marked by a sense of accomplished, atoning finality in the history of grace.

The earliest testimony to this insight probably comes in Paul's quotation from an earlier, presumably Jerusalem, tradition: he speaks of 'Messiah Jesus whom God put forward as the expiation (*hilasterion*) in his own blood for the remission of sins committed in the time of God's forbearance' (Rom. 3:25). The Greek word *hilasterion* translates the Hebrew *kapporeth*, the 'mercy seat', the golden lid of the Ark of the Covenant (Lev. 16:15–19) that is sprinkled with blood by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. It is where God is: 'I appear in the cloud above the mercy seat' (Lev. 16:2). In Paul's dense formula, the implication is clear: the blood of the crucified Messiah on Golgotha is to be viewed as the blood shed in the presence of God for the atonement of sins.

This is a classic instance of metaphor, the act of 'seeing one thing as another' in richly semantic ways: the referent (Jesus' brutal death as a criminal) can be reviewed as a priestly offering of blood/life in the presence of God. The crucified Messiah entering behind the veil of creation into God's presence, is construed in the metaphor as the mercy seat, the true locus of expiation, prefigured in the atoning rites of the Temple. At the time this teaching was given, the Temple and its rituals had not yet been destroyed and (p. 113) abolished. It is only a short step from this to the rich themes of the Epistle to the Hebrews which explicitly presents Jesus as the High Priest who enters the divine presence, taking with him his own blood as an offering to God, there to be received by God, and to become the source of the world's final atonement.

One will not understand Catholic Christianity unless one sees it as a conscious affirmation and transformation of the features of the religion of the Second Temple. After all, the Christian religion is a reconfiguration of features of Jewish biblical religion. The Jewish legacy is not abandoned but reworked and reinterpreted in relation to Christ and his continuing presence in the Church. Catholic Christianity retains a stronger legacy of biblical and first-century Jewish religion than Rabbinic Judaism which focuses on Torah study, prayer, and works of charity as ways in which Jewish life without a Temple was to be lived. The religious category of priesthood and High Priesthood, redundant in post-70 CE Judaism, is boldly revivified by Christian Jews who apply these roles to Christ himself, even they know that he is not of a priestly family (Heb. 7:14). Christ's self-offering in death comes to be seen as the unique and unrepeatable priestly atonement at the heart of human history, endowing all human beings with mercy.

The category of priestly status is subsequently extended and democratized to include the whole community of Christian believers: the first Epistle of Peter invites its readers (Gentile Christians in Asia Minor!) to be 'a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 2:5). No less boldly, Catholic Christianity revives cultic terminology in applying the category of 'priest' also to those who minister liturgically and pastorally in the Church as presbyters, co-workers with bishops. Like Christian life as a whole, ordained ministry in the name of Christ comes to be seen as a 'ministerial priesthood', a participation, centred on the Eucharist, in Christ's priestly work.

The effect is to flood the practices and imagination of Catholic Christianity with religious categories drawn from the Temple: the Eucharist becomes indelibly sacrificial, an atonement ritual in which the atoning sin-offering (Christ) is consumed by those who are baptized, on the model of the eating of the sin-offering by Levitical priests (Lev. 6:25ff); '[the sin-offering] is a thing most holy and has been given to you that you may bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord'. A spiritual participation in Christ's atoning sacrifice for sins becomes a core feature of popular Catholic piety expressed in the prayer of the Morning Offering ('O Jesus through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer you all the prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart …'). The Catholic teaching on salvation is enacted liturgically in the Eucharist and is lived out through discipleship and immersion in Christ's priestly self-offering for the world's sin.

Priestly mediation, intercession, a ritualized pattern of worship, blessings, sacred space, and cultic ministry come to characterize Christian ministry; it retains in its churches an altar (not a table) on which the sacrifice of Calvary is represented; medieval piety will develop a worship of the Blessed Sacrament, the sanctified bread of the divine presence, and revere it as the presence of the Risen Christ in ways which evoke the biblical Ark of the Covenant and the Holy of Holies. Catholicism's later resistance to the (p. 114) non-cultic, non-priestly, book-centred religion proposed by the some sixteenth-century reformers owes much to the depth to which categories drawn from the Jerusalem Temple become embedded in Catholicism's sense of itself as the culmination of the religion of biblical Judaism in which priestly access to the divine presence is extended to all by their eucharistic union with the sacrifice of Christ.

As we saw earlier, the work of interpreting Christ's death is essentially exegetical and metaphorical, dependent almost entirely on the workings of metaphor, on applying a number of metaphorical predications to Christ's death in order to express its efficacy in relation to our condition and destiny. This may be one reason why the Church has always been reluctant to treat this area with the precision that characterizes its account of Trinity and Christology, prompted probably by a sense that it is impossible to exercise proper conceptual controls in an area dominated by metaphors and figurative categories.

But behind the metaphors is an axiom of rigorous power, expressed normatively by Anselm in the eleventh century: 'the will of God is never irrational', laying the foundation for his *a posteriori* justification of the necessity of the self-offering of the Incarnate Son of

God (*Cur Deus Homo* 8). If salvation has come to humanity through Christ's death, then there must be a reason why it happened as it did because God never acts inconsistently and contrary to the demands of reason, truth, justice, mercy, and love, the divine attributes with which God's existence is identical. Hence the death of Jesus on the cross expresses features of the divine 'logic'. The task then of Christian theology is an obedient *nachdenken*, a 'thinking after', which tries to uncover the significances that make this event, and no other, uniquely effective for God's purposes and unsurpassable in what it achieves 'for us and for our salvation'. Anselm offers a strong version of the necessity of the death of Jesus as a means by which salvation comes to us; Aquinas, on the other hand, is more agnostic, judging that we could have been saved in another way, but since we have been saved in this way, we can discern features in the death of Jesus which make it a uniquely fitting means of salvation: 'It was better for us to have been delivered by Christ's passion than by God's will alone' (*ST* III, q. 46, a. 3).

The wealth of salvation in Christ cannot be exhausted by one particular formula and so paragraphs of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (*CCC* 599–618) recapitulates the range of fundamental interpretations of Jesus' death reached in the New Testament: it is a 'mystery of universal redemption' (*CCC* 601); a reconciliation of sinners who had been separated from God by sin (*CCC* 603); a 'voluntary offering to the Father for the salvation of men' (*CCC* 610); 'the Paschal sacrifice that accomplishes the definitive redemption of men' (*CCC* 613); a 'reparation of our disobedience' (*CCC* 614); a 'redemptive sacrifice' (*CCC* 616), etc. In Ricoeur's phrase, 'the symbol gives rise to thought,' and the resonances of these metaphors give rise to a diverse soteriology. The range and depth of the categories should not surprise us.

St Paul, for example, relies on ten different images to describe what Christ accomplishes by his death: justification, salvation, reconciliation, expiation, redemption, freedom, sanctification, transformation, new creation, and glorification. Metaphors, (p. 115) like starlings, love the company of others. By their very nature, all metaphors are unstable and have porous semantic boundaries, and soteriological metaphors are no different. It is impossible to separate in any significant way 'salvation', 'sacrificial offering', 'reconciliation', 'atonement', 'redemption', and 'expiation' from one another; in practice, although the connotations of each may differ, they come to be indistinguishable from one another and virtually interchangeable in Christian speech. We commonly say, for example, that Christ 'redeems' and that Christ 'saves', and the meaning is in practice the same. The Catholic tradition seems content to allow the connotations of a range of metaphors to constitute its *fonds commun* of soteriological thought.

Contrasting Developments

Twentieth-century Catholic theology saw two significant, probably divergent, ways of handling the doctrine of the Trinity in relation to salvation and creation. First of all, the writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–88), in dialogue with the Evangelical and Reformed traditions, introduce original dramatic and mythical perspectives into how the Catholic

tradition explores the Trinitarian dimensions of Christ's death. Karl Rahner (1904–84) on the other hand, has enriched the Trinitarian aspects of the creational relationship by integrating it with a doctrine of grace. These theologians, both coming from the Jesuit intellectual tradition, exemplify both the richness and the tensions in modern Catholic theology.

Taking his inspiration from Karl Barth, von Balthasar develops an eloquent, dramatic Trinitarian narrative in which forsakenness, abandonment, and separation from the Father characterize the Incarnate Son's kenotic service of lost humanity. Through von Balthasar, themes from Reformed dogmatics find their way into the Catholic world as he chooses a multifaceted aesthetic/dramatic approach of elevated subtlety, deploying richly suggestive metaphorical, mythical, and narrative schemes in order to capture the irreplaceable role of Christ in effecting salvation.

At the core of his writings von Balthasar asks a profound question: 'how can God bear in himself that which is godless and which is yet a possible final consequence of human freedom?' (von Balthasar 1975: 51). He will answer it with Barth's metaphor for Incarnation (drawn from the parable of the Prodigal Son), that it is 'the way of the Son of God into the far country' of sin and alienation from God. In Barth's variation on the parable of the Prodigal Son, the 'son of man' (humanity) takes possession of his inheritance of freedom and goes into the far country of sin and alienation. Rather than wait for him to return of his own accord, God proactively sends his own beloved and faithful Son to accompany the faithless son of man, to the extent of sharing the forsakenness which the son of man has brought upon himself. Far from the house of the Father, the divine Son enters into full solidarity with lost humanity, walking with him even to the point of experiencing in his death the forsakenness that sinners bring upon themselves. So completely does the Son of God identify with sinners that he comes to stand vicariously in (p. 116) their place, bearing on the Cross the weight of God's judgement on sin. This is Reformed soteriology at its modern best, and von Balthasar makes it central.

The great strength of Barth's still breath-taking revision of the Calvinist doctrine of election—on which so much of von Balthasar's Trinitarian soteriology depends—is its inclusion of a teaching about vicarious substitution within a doctrine of the Trinity: the sin-bearing Son, 'the judge judged in our place', is the determinative event in the eternal life of God. Even 'before' the creation and its sinful turbulences take place, in the eternity proper to God's being, God determines that his being will be directed towards bearing the burden of creaturely sin. Barth had written:

> God from all eternity ordains this obedient One in order that He might bear the suffering which the disobedient have deserved and which for the sake of God's righteousness must necessarily be borne. Indeed, the very obedience which was exacted of Him and attained by Him was His willingness to take upon Himself the divine rejection of all others and to suffer that which they ought to have suffered … For this reason, He is the Lamb slain, and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. For this reason, the *crucified* Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God'

(*CD* II/2, 123).

Von Balthasar will approve the Barthian attempt to inscribe the Paschal mystery on to God's eternal being so that the Trinitarian life comes to be seen as intrinsically 'supra-kenotic': God is not changed by the death of the Son, as process theologians like to claim, but rather the Son's offering of himself to the Father is the responsive self-emptying that mirrors the Father's eternal self-emptying into the Son, both movements being conveyed in the love that is the Spirit. (The Trinity is a series of verbs.) The only way to approach the Trinitarian life, von Balthasar says, is 'on the basis of what is manifest in God's kenosis in the theology of the covenant—and thence in the theology of the Cross' (von Balthasar 1994: 324). And this has Paschal Trinitarian theology to be done 'as on a knife-edge', between, on one side, a theology tempted to talk fashionably about 'the pain of God' (Moltmann's theology of divine 'becoming' and 'completion'), and, on the other side, a theology which is bound to say:

> that something happens in God that not only justifies the possibility and actual occurrence of all suffering in the world but also justifies God's sharing in the latter, in which he goes to the length of vicariously taking on man's God-lessness …
>
> This divine act that brings forth the Son … involves the positing of an absolute, infinite 'distance' that can contain and embrace all the other distances that are possible within the world of finitude, including the distance of sin. Inherent in Father's love is an absolute renunciation: he will not be God for himself alone. He lets go of his divinity and, in this sense, manifests a (divine) God-lessness (of love, of course)
>
> (von Balthasar 1994: 324).

This subtle Trinitarian metaphysic probably transgresses the limits of what can be said intelligibly about God, but there is surely merit in von Balthasar's figurative image of a (p. 117) 'distance' within God wide and deep enough to encompass the distance created by sin. As we saw in the first part of our discussion, von Balthasar regards the 'otherness' of the Son as the condition of the otherness of creation; his soteriology extends this to the Son's capacity to bear the otherness of creaturely sin because there is an 'internal distance' within God's life that, in the Incarnation, can be stretched to become an 'opposition' between the holiness of the Father and the sin-burdened Son. Barth is the silent presence in these lines of von Balthasar:

> God goes silently along the way into complete abandonment—suffering with us, truly representing all of us … The Father not only waits for the spontaneous or constrained return of the Prodigal, but (in the form of his Son) sends out his love into his desolation. He allows his son to identify himself with his lost brother. And by this very power of identifying himself—without keeping a respectable distance—with his complete opposite, God the Father recognizes the consubstantiality, the divinity of the one he has sent as his redeeming word into the world.

> He recognizes that his word, become man, has been able to do what the Father intended when he generated and uttered this word: to make himself audible and intelligible to anyone who does not want to hear any more about God. In other words, that Jesus could become the brother of the very least and of the lost; that he could reveal more by deed than by word; that God, as all-powerful, is love, and as love, is all-powerful; that he is this intrinsically, in the mystery of the Trinity, which can be explained only by the total opposition—between being with God and being abandoned by God—within God himself
>
> (von Balthasar and Ratzinger 1972: 52–53).

Von Balthasar will say provocatively—no other Catholic theologian ever said this—that it is 'the dogma of vicarious suffering, of "bearing the guilt of others"—which in the last analysis determines whether a theology is anthropological [i.e. constructed out of human imaginings] or Christocentric [i.e. founded on God's objective revelation]' (von Balthasar 1968: 82). He is stepping outside normative Catholic teaching in making this claim, bringing a controversial Reformed teaching into the heart of Catholic systematics. But von Balthasar accords it the highest priority because, in his view, it is the unique feature of God's kenotic revelation in Christ for which nothing else prepares us:

> … the man Jesus, the Son of the living God, descends into the God-forsakenness of hell, taking upon himself out of love for God the sickness unto death of the creature who has strayed away from God. … The Son can go into the estrangement from God of hell, because he understands his way as an expression of his love for the Father and he can give to his love the character of obedience to such an extent that he experiences the complete godlessness of lost man
>
> (von Balthasar 1975: 51).

There is no denying the power of such a Trinitarian soteriology, especially when von Balthasar, getting up a head of steam, revisits the Patristic theme of the descent of (p. 118) Christ to hell (where the saints of the Old Testament await deliverance by him) and reworks it in the light of the mystical experiences of his stigmatic associate Adrienne von Speyr. Following her lead, von Balthasar proposes that Christ descends to the hell of the *damned* in order to be a saving presence among them.

Hell, a shadowy place by nature, is turned into an antechamber to heaven, a sort of purgatory without the need for purgation, because the logic of this reworked myth is that all are saved, or, as von Balthasar carefully phrased it in order to avoid formal condemnation, we 'dare to *hope* that all may be saved'. The optative mood should fool no one: von Balthasar gives the Church a modern myth that is at odds with Christian teaching about the seriousness of human choice, the scope of moral evil which humans willingly commit (one can never be sure about how 'free' people actually are), and the respect God has for the choices which human beings make. Christ dies 'for' sinners: this is the classic image from the New Testament which goes back to Christ's own interpretation of his death; but

should Christ's death be treated as an act of substitution, or even more shockingly an experience of damnation in place of the damned?

The danger is that at the hands of von Balthasar the doctrine of God becomes absorbed and reworked in mythical narratives so powerful that they cannot but impair the credibility of Christian discourse and its roots in Jewish monotheism. Karl Rahner, to whom we now turn, finds all this speculation unacceptably gnostic and hubristic:

> … there is a modern tendency (I don't want to say a theory but at least a tendency) to develop a theology of the death of God that, in the last analysis, seems to me to be gnostic. One can find this in Hans Urs von Balthasar and in Adrienne von Speyr, although naturally much more marked in her than in him … In Moltmann and others I sense a theology of absolute paradox, of Patripassianism, perhaps even of a Schelling-like projection into God of division, conflict, godlessness and death. To this I would say first of all: what do we know then so precisely about God? And second, I would ask: What use would that be to me as consolation in the true sense of the word?
>
> (Imhof and Biallowons 1986: 127).

This is a fair and probably unanswerable critique of the theological excesses that happen when the dramatic mythical imagination escapes from reasoned controls. Rahner, while being no less insistent on the Trinity as a 'mystery of salvation', resists the blandishments of drama, myth, and metaphor as a violation of reverential agnosticism. He is best understood as a theologian who explores the anthropology implied in a Trinitarian doctrine of creation. Temperamentally closer to that other great South German thinker, Martin Heidegger, than to von Balthasar's aestheticism and mythical imagination, Rahner felt more at home with existential philosophical probings into selfhood, Hegelian speculations about the relation of the Absolute to finite spirit, and the experience of silence and darkness as the human person enters the mystery of God. (In his final visit to England shortly before his death, while a rapt audience listened to John (p. 119) MacQuarrie's appreciative lecture on Rahner's work, the great man himself sat grumpily, saying his rosary. He was pious in an intense, strangely Rahnerian way.)

We have already indicated that, in spite of his reputation among Balthasarians and various *intégristes*, Rahner had an orthodox and profound theology of salvation through the death of Christ. Nothing in his writings undermines Catholic orthodox soteriology. Yet that is not the focus of his thought: he is concerned to offer a philosophically grounded account of Christianity that might rescue it from modern oblivion, much as the figures of the Greek pantheon are now of no existential interest to anyone. Rahner was deeply disturbed by the fact that so many contemporaries had lost all sense of why the question of God is important. Hence his concern to explore how the word 'God' is essential to the human person and why it is needed if we are to understand the 'mysterious process' which man is:

> Man really exists as man only when he uses the word ‘God’ even as a question … The absolute death of the word ‘God’, including the eradication of its past, would be the signal, no longer heard by anyone, that man himself had died’
>
> (Rahner 1978: 78).

Barth and von Balthasar, one feels, could not wait to proclaim the great metaphors of salvation, reconciliation, and regeneration through Christ’s death: they are the great preachers, dramatists, and myth-makers of modern Christianity. By contrast, Rahner’s compendious *Foundations of Christian Faith* is astonishingly free from the great metaphors of salvation as he tries to articulate a fundamental theology on which, presumably, the great metaphorical structures can still be built, but which does not rely on them for its veracity. Rahner knew that much of the difficulty people have with Christianity is really a difficulty with Christianity’s metaphors: the ability to construe them intelligibly and to be existentially affected by them, seems to have eluded so many modern non-believers. This is why, one suspects, Rahner felt he could not rely on the power of Christianity’s great soteriological metaphors effectively to convey to a secularized, generally atheistic modern population what is meant by God and why Christ matters to the way we (moderns) are. Like Schleiermacher in the early nineteenth century, Rahner was attentive to what Christianity’s ‘cultured despisers’ needed: for him, it wasn’t simply that they got God wrong, it was that they got themselves wrong. He is unafraid to invest the word ‘mystery’ with anthropological significance:

> Whether he is consciously aware of it or not, whether he is open to the truth or suppresses it, man’s whole spiritual and intellectual existence is orientated toward a holy mystery which is the basis of his being. This mystery is the inexplicit and unexpressed horizon which always encircles and upholds the small area of our every-day experience of knowing and acting … It is our most fundament, most natural condition, but for that very reason it is also the most hidden and least regarded reality, speaking to us by its silence, and even whilst appearing to be absent, revealing its present making us take cognizance of our own limitations
>
> (Rahner 1972: 122).

(p. 120) Rahner is rightly described by George Vass as ‘a theologian in search of a philosophy’, attempting to express Christian truth in conjunction with a philosophical account of the nature of the human person. He tries to offer a philosophy of grace (an ambitious conjunction of discourses), grounded in the Thomist perspective of how the invisible missions of the divine Word and Spirit create the conditions in humanity for a response to the mystery of the self-giving God. The human person in his/her transcendental orientation towards the fullness of truth and love is constitutively in touch with God. Hence Rahner’s statement that ‘man is the event of the self-communication of God’: the divine self-gift is an intrinsic modification of human selfhood, and for Rahner, this is true of *everyone, everywhere*. ‘Man always lives by the holy mystery, even where he is not conscious of it’ (Rahner 1966: 54).

Through their orientation towards truth and love, all human beings are already caught up in the elusive, non-objectifiable self-gift of God who is present not as an object to be known and grasped, but as the horizon of truth and love that draws us into full selfhood. If one is a Christian believer, fully 'in Christ', one can live out this mystery in an explicit, informed way guided by God's revealing self-disclosure in Israel, Christ, and the Church. Others may live out this mystery no less deeply but they will do so implicitly or unthematically—hence Rahner's often misunderstood idea of the 'anonymous Christian'. Our orientation towards truth and love is for Rahner, not simply a preparation for divine grace, but already an engagement with the divine mystery within the depth of selfhood.

> What is given in grace and incarnation is not something distinct from God but God himself. He does not use the creature to impart himself, as when it points to God by its created reality. *God imparts himself immediately of himself to the creature.*
>
> (Rahner 1966: 66).

And Rahner held that the last sentence of this quotation was true of the non-believer as of the believer, and this is possible because in the relation to every person that God has as creator, there is divine self-gift. We are all in 'deep God': that is what creation means. From this starting point, Rahner has to show how the person of Jesus Christ and his saving death that releases unbounded love (the Spirit) play a decisive role in effecting God's saving self-gift. The reader of Rahner's philosophical theology may herself be so caught up in the 'transcendental' presence of God to the human person—all seem to be intrinsically and deeply engraced!—that the worry is that there is nothing for Christ to do.

When Rahner asks about the central, normative idea in Christianity, his answer differs significantly from von Balthasar's. In an interview in 1974, Rahner considers: 'the fundamental and basic conception within Christian theology'. Rahner's answer is both strangely traditional—evoking the Patristic (and Orthodox) theme of divinization ('partaking of the divine nature' (2 Pet. 1:4))—and at the same time philosophically Hegelian in that it looks to events in history as the means by which the Absolute is mediated to created reality. Rahner puts it in these terms:

(p. 121)

> … the divinization of the world through the Spirit of God is humanly and speculatively the more fundamental basic conception for Christianity, out of which the Incarnation and soteriology arise as an inner moment. This is so because the divinization of the world must manifest itself in an historical way and must come in its history to an irreversible point.
>
> (Imhof and Biallowons 1986: 126).

The meaning Rahner gives to 'divinization' is that 'God can communicate himself in his own reality to what is not divine, without ceasing to be infinite reality and absolute mystery, and without man ceasing to be a finite existent different from God' (Rahner 1978: 119). (The metaphysics of Chalcedon's distinction of natures, outlined earlier, are not ig-

nored by Rahner.) And integral to this process is the 'inner moment' of Christ and his death, which advances and seals the divine gift within the structures of creaturely existence. Creation and the life and death of the Incarnate Son are therefore 'two moments and phases in the real world of the unique, even though internally differentiated process of God's self-renunciation and self-expression' (Rahner 1966a: 177–178).

It is clear that Rahner's is a very different conceptual world from that favoured by von Balthasar. Reading Rahner, one engages in an intense, philosophically framed exploration of how God is the deepest dimension of selfhood and creaturely identity, always and everywhere in the human family, and of how grace might be woven into the whole of creation. Theologians talk to one another across the centuries, and Rahner is a great interlocutor with Augustine on selfhood and Aquinas on how, both philosophically and theologically, God matters to the way humans are. Von Balthasar, on the other hand, brings the richness of Reformed soteriology into the Catholic tradition and directs his appeal not to philosophy, but to the way the Catholic imagination might be stimulated by myth and drama to grasp the Trinity as a saving mystery. Few theologians have exhibited his radical boldness in developing imaginative and mythical approaches, freshly minted, to Trinitarian theology. Catholic theology, emerging in the middle of the twentieth century from an arid scholasticism and needing to create a space for dialogue and engagement with modern cultures, produced in Rahner and von Balthasar two very different reinterpreters of the Catholic tradition's reflection on creation and salvation.

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The Trinity’s Loving Act of Creation

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter discusses the Catholic understanding of God as Creator. It begins with an overview of the biblical proclamation as found in the Old and New Testaments and proceeds by citing the writings of Irenaeus as an example of early patristic thought. It then considers the doctrinal and philosophical understandings of God as one and as a Trinity of persons, with particular emphasis on the thought of Thomas Aquinas. It also examines the act of creation and the type of relationship such an act establishes between God and creation. The chapter highlights creation’s eternal purpose: for human beings to become the Father’s children after the manner of his own eternal Son, which would be achieved through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

Keywords: God, Old Testament, New Testament, Irenaeus, Trinity, persons, Thomas Aquinas, act of creation, human beings, Holy Spirit

THIS chapter examines the Catholic understanding of God as Creator. First, it will discuss the biblical proclamation as found within the Old and New Testaments. Second, the writings of Irenaeus are studied briefly as an example of early patristic thought. Third, the doctrinal and philosophical understandings of God as one and as a Trinity of persons, especially in the thought of Thomas Aquinas, are considered. Fourth, having articulated the nature of the one God as a Trinity of persons, t there follows an examination of the act of creation and the type of relationship such an act establishes between God and creation. The purpose of this chapter is to present a biblical, philosophical, and theological understanding of the Triune God as the Creator of all.

The Biblical Proclamation of God as Creator

The Israelites first experienced God as loving and compassionate, the sole Saviour who freed them from the slavery of Egypt. This experience of God as Saviour nurtured their belief that God is likewise the Creator. While God is first Creator before he is Saviour, yet, experientially, it was only as the Israelites encountered God as Saviour that they came to

realize that the God who has the power to save also possessed the unique power to create. Within the Hebrew Scriptures, the notion of God as Creator expresses the intimate presence of God and God's radical otherness. Being the Creator ultimately founds God's close relationship to the created order and simultaneously reveals that God is not a member of the created order.

The first creation story illustrates that God is distinct from all else that exists, since God, in an orderly systematic manner, calls into existence the cosmos and all that it contains (Gen. 1). Thus, neither the cosmos nor anything within it is divine. Moreover, (p. 125) unlike the Babylonian gods, the God of Israel does not form the world by doing battle with other cosmic deities. God simply calls forth creation through his mere word (Gen. 1; Pss. 104 [103], 148:8). 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth' (Ps. 33 [32]:6). Both Melchizedek and Abraham profess that God is the most high who created heaven and earth (Gen. 14:19–22). The pagan idols are dead, but Yahweh is the living God who made the earth and all that exists therein (Jer. 10:1–16). What is also evident within the creation stories is that everything God creates is good and that God even creates human beings in God's own image and likeness (Gen. 1–2). This, too, is in contrast to the prevailing contemporary creations myths where matter is perceived to be the cause of evil and the deities take on the likeness of human beings, even to the extent of imitating their sinfulness—lust, greed, jealousy, and so forth.

The later Wisdom literature further developed the notion of God as Creator. Wisdom is personified as the first work of God before creation itself (Prov. 8:22 and Sir. 1:9, 24:9). Thus, Wisdom was present when all came into being and was actually cooperating with God as the master artisan (Prov. 8:24–30 and Wis. 8:6). The Spirit of God is also personified as an instrument of creation. 'When you send forth your Spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground' (Pss. 104 [103]:30, 33 [32]:6). The New Testament and later Christian authors find here a prefigurement of the revelation of the Son as the Word of God and the divine life-giving power as the Holy Spirit.

While the Old Testament clearly portrays God as the Creator of all, yet only once does it allude to the concept of *creatio ex nihilo*—creation out of nothing. 'I beg you, my child, to look at the heaven and the earth and see everything that is in them, and recognize that God did not make them out of things that existed' (2 Mac. 7:28). The New Testament assumes as its own the Old Testament heritage and so speaks of God as Creator (Mark 13:19; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 3:9; 1 Tim. 6:13; and Rev. 4:11, 10:6, 14:7), and in so doing distinguishes him from all else that is. God as Creator is especially evident in the prayers (4:24) and the speeches within Acts (14:15–17, 17:22–31). These speeches were primarily attempts at evangelizing the Greeks. The speakers wished to confirm that the one God of the Greeks was also the Creator God who has now brought salvation in Jesus.

The New Testament also emphasized two unique aspects of God as the Creator. The first, following the Old Testament allusions, is that the Father created through his eternal Word/Son (John 1:2–3, 1 Cor. 8:6, Col. 1:15–20, Heb. 1:1–3), and that the Father manifests his life-giving power in the raising of Jesus from the dead by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:23,

32, 36; 3:13–17; 4:10; 5:30–31; 7:52; 10:39–40; 13:27–30; 17:31; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; Rom. 4:24, 10:9; 1 Pet. 1:21). Thus the Father will also raise to glory all who believe in his Son (Rom. 6:5, 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14, 15:20ff.; 2 Cor. 4:14, 13:4; Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:18; 2:12ff.; 1 Thess. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:11). Christians, then, participate in a new birth (1 Pet. 1:3), a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), a new life (Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12–13, Eph. 2:1), and so become 'in [Christ] one new Man' (Eph. 2:15). This all finds its completion when the Father creates a new heaven and a new earth with the return of Jesus in glory (Rev. 21:1–22:5). We see here that God as Creator and God as Saviour are intimately intertwined in the New Testament, and that this unity finds its source in the unique person of Jesus who sends forth the Holy Spirit as the first gift of redemption.

(p. 126) Irenaeus: God the Good Creator

Building on the biblical and early theology of the Apologists, Irenaeus of Lyons (AD *c*.130–200) refuted the Gnostic understanding of God and creation and in so doing advanced an authentic Catholic understanding of God as Creator.

The Gnostics of the first and second centuries AD held that everything that exists, including God, formed one continuous whole. There was one contiguous chain of being which included the immutably perfect God at the apex and the passably corrupt matter at the bottom. Between God and matter were placed a whole myriad (depending on the various schools) of lesser beings or Aeons. While God was transcendent for the Gnostics, in that God was remote from the finite realm (which God himself did not create but some lesser being, since for him to do so would have jeopardized his perfect transcendence) and could have no direct contact with it, God was, nonetheless, only relatively transcendent since God, too, was part of the whole. Moreover, the Gnostics were ontological dualists in that God, as spirit, is good while matter, simply as matter, is the source of evil and corruptibility, and so is unintelligible. By conceiving reality in this dualistic fashion, the Gnostics could maintain both the unchangeable perfect transcendence of God and address the reason for why there is evil in the world.

In contradistinction to the Gnostic view of God and the pleroma of various Aeons, Irenaeus enunciated his Christian notion of God. While he was acquainted with the philosophy of his day, Irenaeus was far more the biblical theologian than the philosopher. It was with a mind steeped in the Bible that Irenaeus forged his refutation of Gnosticism and equally his positive contribution to the Christian tradition. Thus, if we are to understand Irenaeus properly, we must grasp that the act of creation was for him the pivotal event, which allowed him both to counter the Gnostic teaching on God and to assert his own conception. For Irenaeus the act of creation became the fundamental hermeneutical principle that governed his conception of God and of God's relation to the created order.

In Book Two of his *Adversus Haereses (Against the Heresies*), Irenaeus writes:

> It is necessary, then, that we begin with the first and greatest principle, with the Creator God who made heaven and earth, and all things in them, whom these individuals blasphemously call the fruit of degeneracy. [It is necessary] further that we show there is nothing either above him or after him, and that he was influenced by no one but, rather, made all things by his own counsel and free will, since he alone is God, and he alone is Lord, and he alone is Creator, and he alone is Father, and he alone contains all things, and himself gives existence to all things
>
> (*Adv. Haer*. 2. 1.1; Irenaeus 2012: 17).

Placing the notion of creation at the centre of his theology allows Irenaeus to establish three essential truths. Firstly, as in the Hebrew Scriptures, it establishes the absolute otherness of God in a manner that is far more radical than that of the Gnostics. (p. 127) God is not part of a contiguous whole, but absolutely (ontologically) distinct from all else that exists. As Creator, God is then 'distinct' from all else: 'For He Himself is uncreated, without beginning and without end, in need of no one, self-sufficient, bestowing existence on all the rest' (*Adv. Haer.* 3, 8, 3; Irenaeus 2012a: 44). Secondly and simultaneously, it establishes, as also found in the Bible, God's immediate relationship to the created order. Thirdly, since the good God, unlike the Gnostic God, is the Creator of the material world, matter itself is good, which is also in keeping with Genesis 1.

> With God, there are simultaneously exhibited power, wisdom, and goodness. His power and goodness [appear] in this, that of his own will he called into being and fashioned things which had no previous existence; his wisdom [is shown] in his having made created things parts of one harmonious and consistent whole; and those things which, through his super-eminent kindness, receive growth and a long period of existence, do reflect the glory of the uncreated One, of that God who bestows what is good ungrudgingly
>
> (*Adv. Haer*. 4, 38, 2; Irenaeus 1989: 521).

Irenaeus is, thus, very clear that God creates 'out of nothing' (*creatio ex nihilo*) and that it is this act of creation, of bringing something into existence, that simultaneously establishes his complete transcendent otherness as God and God's immediate relationship to creation as its Creator.

The Philosophical Foundation of Creation: God as *Pure Being*

The Christian biblical and patristic tradition holds that God is almighty, all-powerful, all-perfect, all-good, etc, and it is because of these attributes that God possesses the ability to create. Nonetheless, what is it about the very nature of God that demands that God possess these and similar attributes? Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225–74) provides a philosophical answer that is not only in accord with the Bible, but also one that illuminates the

depth of the biblical revelation. Aquinas argues that God's nature is '*to be*', that God is *ipsum esse* (to-be itself) and thus, *actus purus* (pure act).

Within finite beings, Aquinas perceives a distinction between what something is, its essence or quiddity, and that something is. 'I can know, for instance, what a man or a phoenix is and still be ignorant whether it has being or reality. From this it is clear that being is other than essence or quiddity, unless perhaps there is a reality whose quiddity is its being' (*De Ente et Essentia* 4. 6; Maurer 1968: 55). Thus, for Aquinas, *esse* is that act by which something actually does exist. *Esse* (to be) is a verb and as such does not possess any quiddity, but purely specifies the act by which something exists and so is the foundation of all subsequent actions performed by the existing being. While *esse* (to be) and *essentia* (quiddity) are distinct in that *esse* possesses no quiddity and *essentia* possesses no (p. 128) *esse*, yet they are not realities in themselves. Rather, only beings actually exist and so *esse* and *essentia* are related to one another, for Aquinas, in an act/potency relationship. *Esse* makes *to be* what potentially is and potentially *what is* only *is* because of *esse*.

Because *esse* and *essentia* are distinct within finite reality, no finite being, whether it be a man, dog, or star, is of such a nature that its nature demands that it be. Therefore, Aquinas argues that the *esse* of finite creatures must come from an extrinsic cause. 'There must be a reality that is the cause of being for all things, because it is pure being (*esse tantum*). If this were not so, one would go on to infinity in causes, for everything that is not pure being has a cause of its being.' This being who is pure *esse* is 'the first cause or God' (*De Ente et Essentia* 4. 7; Maurer 1968: 57).

Aquinas's understanding of God as pure *esse* is founded on what *esse* is in creatures. God must be pure *esse*, for this is what finite beings lack, and what they must be given if they are to be. If God were not pure *esse*, God would be in the same situation as creatures and so be in need of *esse* himself. While finite beings are composite beings in which their essence (*essentia*) and existence (*esse*) are in an act/potency relationship, God, whose very nature is to be, *ipsum esse*, is not composite, and 'therefore his essence is his existence'; that is, God's very nature or quiddity is '*to-be*' and nothing more (*ST* I q.3, a.4).

As *ipsum esse*, being itself, God's very nature is not, then, designated or signified by a noun, but by a verb. Being pure act (pure verb) as *ipsum esse* does not mean that God is *something* fully in act, such as a creature might actualize its full potential, but rather that God is act pure and simple. Because God is *ipsum esse,* God has no self-constituting potency that needs to be actualized in order for him to be more fully who God is, not because God is *something* fully in act, but again, because God is act pure and simple. God is *actus purus*. It is this philosophical understanding of God that is requisite for understanding what it means for God to be Creator. God can bring other beings into existence only because God himself is pure being for it is precisely 'being' that other beings require if they are to exist.

What is also evident, in keeping with the biblical revelation, is that God's manner of existence differs in kind and not merely in degree from that of creatures. Christian philosophy and theology do not then espouse what is sometimes referred to as 'Onto-theology,' that is, that God transcends the created order only in the sense that God is the highest being within a continuum of beings. Rather, as *ipsum esse*, God transcends the created order in the sense that God exists in a manner that is uniquely God's own. It is precisely because God transcends the created order, in that God is not a member of the created order, that God can be so intimately related to the created order as its Creator.

The Doctrinal Foundation of Creation: The Persons of the Trinity

Since the One nature of God is 'to be,' how is such an understanding related to the truth of revelation that the one God is a Trinity of persons? Christian tradition holds, (p. 129) following Gregory of Nazianzus (AD 329–89) in the East and Augustine (AD 354–430) and Aquinas in the West, that the persons of the Trinity are distinguished by their relationships, that is, that they subsist as distinct subjects or are defined as distinct persons only in relationship to one another. This account of God directly informs our understanding of God as Creator.

Human persons are partially defined by their relationships and so cannot be fully understood apart from their relationships. A father is a father only because he begets a child and so is related to his child as father. A woman is a wife only because she has a husband. However, human persons are not entirely constituted by their relationships. Relationships can cease (friends can fall out), and yet the person continues to live. A human person can also make new relationships (one can marry or make a new friend). Human persons then possess relational potential, which can be actualized, and in so doing, they are defined as who they are. While human persons cannot exist without relationships, yet they are always more than the sum total of their relationships.

For human beings not to be completely constituted by their relationships may first appear to be a good thing. Human persons possess an independent integrity apart from their relationships. However, it is precisely this independent integrity that does not allow a human person to give his or herself completely to another, but he or she must do so only through mediating words (words of kindness and love) and actions (hugs, kisses, sexual relations, etc.) which express only a partial giving of oneself even if one's intention is to give the whole of oneself. This is not the case within the Trinity.

The persons of the Trinity are eternally constituted in their own singular identity only in relation to one another, and thus they subsist as who they are only within their mutual relationships. In their relationships to one another each person of the Trinity subsistently defines and is equally subsistently defined by the other persons. Thus, the persons of the

Trinity are subsistent relations. These mutually subsistent relationships, which constitute and define the identity of the persons of the Trinity, are founded on origin and action.

The Father subsists eternally as Father only in relation to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, for his very identity as Father is predicated on his being the origin of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and so he is constituted as Father in the one eternal act of begetting the Son and spirating the Holy Spirit. The Father then only subsists as Father in and by giving himself wholly, unlike human beings, as Father in the begetting of his Son. He gives himself wholly in the begetting of the Son through the Holy Spirit. The Father, then, equally and simultaneously gives himself wholly in spirating the Holy Spirit for the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father as the fullness of his fatherly love in and by whom the Father begets the Son.

The Son subsists eternally as Son only in relation to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, for his very identity is predicated on his being begotten of the Father from whom he takes his origin and on his being conformed by the Holy Spirit, in whom he is begotten, to be the Son of and for the Father. As the Son, he in turn gives himself completely to the Father as Son in the same Spirit who conformed him to be Son of and for the Father. Thus, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as the act of the Son's (p. 130) total giving himself in love for the Father who begot him in the same Holy Spirit of love. Therefore, the Son is Son only because he is begotten by the Father in the Holy Spirit and in the reciprocal giving of himself completely to the Father in the same Spirit in whom he was begotten.

The Holy Spirit subsists eternally as the Holy Spirit only in relation to the Father and to the Son, for his identity as the Holy Spirit is predicated on his coming forth from the Father as the one in whom the Father begets the Son and as the one in whom the Son, having been begotten in the Spirit, in turn completely gives himself, in the Spirit, to the Father as Son. Thus, while the Spirit comes forth from the Father as the Father's love in whom the Son is begotten and proceeds from the Son as the Son's love of the Father, the Holy Spirit equally only subsists, as the Holy Spirit, in the act of conforming the Father to be Father of and for the Son, and in the simultaneous act of conforming the Son to be Son of and for the Father. The Holy Spirit only subsists as the Holy Spirit in relation to the Father and to the Son.

A number of important conclusions must now be drawn which bear directly on God as a Trinity of persons and their act of creation. Firstly, because the persons of the Trinity only subsist as distinct subjects in relationship to one another, they are fully, completely, and absolutely relational. Each distinct person is defined as who he is singularly, and so subsists as who he is, only in relation to the other two. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit solely and completely are who they are only in relation to one another.

Secondly, because the persons of the Trinity subsist only in relation to one another, they are relations in act and only relations in act. As designating subsistent relations or relations fully in act, the terms 'Father', 'Son', and 'Holy Spirit' are therefore *verbs,* for they refer to, define, and name, solely and exclusively, the *interrelated acts* by which all three persons are who they are. The Father is not 'someone' who possesses fatherhood. The

term 'Father' designates that the Father is completely and solely 'fatherhood in act' and nothing more. The Son is sonship itself for he is begotten by the Father in the Spirit and so gives himself in the same Spirit to the Father as Son. The Holy Spirit has no specific name because the Holy Spirit is solely defined as the one who proceeds from the Father and the Son and in so doing is the act that conforms the Father to be Father of and for the Son, and the Son to be Son of and for the Father. Put succinctly and boldly, the persons of the Trinity are not nouns; they are verbs and the names (nouns) which designate them—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—designate the acts by which they are defined.

By stating that the persons of the Trinity are verbs and not nouns does not mean that they are not acting subjects or persons, as if one needs a noun (a subject or person) in order to perform an action. Because the acts (the verbs) that completely define and constitute the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are personal or subjective acts (and not impersonal acts), the very acts themselves constitute the subjectivity or personhood of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Within the Trinity, the action (the verb) constitutes the subject and the subject is a verb—the action by which he is so constituted.

(p. 131) The Trinity as the One God is Utterly Relational and Active

From our doctrinal examination of the persons of the Trinity as subsistent relations and from our philosophical study of God as *ipsum esse*, we have discovered that both converge on the notion of 'pure act'. As subsistent relations, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are fully in act in that they are constituted and defined only in the act of being interrelated to one another. As stated above, because the persons of the Trinity are subsistent relations fully in act, they are verbs (pure acts) and not nouns (substances). Equally, the nature of God, as conceived philosophically, is pure act—*ipsum esse* or *actus purus*—and so is a verb as well. While Aquinas does not bring out this relationship, in that he never addresses the relationship between God being *ipsum esse* and being a Trinity of persons, yet he does state that 'relation really existing in God has the existence of the divine essence in no way distinct therefrom … Thus it is clear that in God relation and essence do not differ from each other, but are one and the same' (*ST* I, q.28, a.2).

Therefore, it is *ipsum esse* which grounds the Trinity of persons as being subsistent relations fully in act, pure verbs, and likewise, it is the Trinity of persons as subsistent relations fully in act which grounds their being *ipsum esse*, pure verb. There is an inherent ontological reciprocal constitutive relationship, or better, a reciprocal constitutive ontological oneness, between being *ipsum esse* and being subsistent relations (and vice versa) for both express 'being' as *actus purus*. What we see then from the convergence of our doctrinal and philosophical study is that to be fully 'to-be' (*ipsum esse*) is 'to be fully relational' (a subsistent relation).

It is precisely because the one God is a Trinity of persons fully in act and so being itself, that he is able to bring other beings into existence and doing so by relating them to himself as he is in himself—as a Trinity of persons.

God and the Act of Creation

Having examined the notion of God both from a philosophical and theological understanding, the following discussion will first examine the philosophical understanding of God as Creator, and then address the Trinitarian issues, which will add theological depth and aesthetic beauty to the God/creature relationship.

First, for Aquinas, 'to create' is to bring something into being and so establishes a relationship between the Creator and the creature. Since the act of creation is the bringing of something into existence that did not previously exist, the act of creation does not imply motion, change, or succession, for motion, change, and succession only take place in previously existing beings. The act of creation is something much more radical and more dynamic than simply a change. The effect of the act of creation in the creature is (p. 132) the existence of the creature itself. 'Creation is not a change, but the very dependence of the created act of being upon the principle from which it is produced' (*SCG* II, 18, 2). Thus, a unique relationship is established between God and creation, a relationship such that if it ceased to be, the creature would cease to be. The relationship between God and the creature must be, therefore, always in act in that it is only by continuously being related to God that the creature exists.

Second, 'to create', as Aquinas states, signifies action on the part of God. God truly acts, but since God is pure act, the act of creation signifies no other action than the pure act that God is. Human beings cannot comprehend how a being who is pure act acts, but God can act in no other way for that is simply what God is—pure existence or pure act. Moreover, the act of creation itself demands that God act by no other act than the pure act that God is as *ipsum esse* for no other act is capable of such a singular effect, that is, bringing something into existence.

Thirdly, there is a further point that manifests that God and creatures are related to one another in the most intimate manner, far different and unlike a mediated relationship found among creatures. Because God creates by no other act than the pure act that God is, the creature is related to God as God actually exists as *ipsum esse* for it is only by being related to God as pure being that creatures themselves come to be and continue in existence—acquire their own act of existence from God. It is precisely because God is wholly other than creatures that allows him to be related to them in such an intimate manner. This view of Creator/creature relationship is very biblical. St Paul, when preaching in Athens at the Areopagus, told the men of Athens that the unknown God that they worshipped 'made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth', and so God 'does not live in shrines made by men'. Nonetheless, this utterly transcendent Creator God is very close to them. 'Yet he is not far from each one of us' for 'In him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your poets have said, "For we are indeed

his offspring" ' (Acts 17:22–28). Thus, the act of creation establishes a relationship that is utterly intimate and thoroughly dynamic for it is only by being related immediately to God as God is that the creature comes to be and is. Aquinas writes:

> God is in all things; not, indeed, as part of their essence, nor as an accident; but as an agent is present to that upon which it works … Now since God is very being by his own essence, created being must be his proper effect … Now God causes this effect in things not only when they first begin to be, but as long as they are preserved in being … Therefore as long as a thing has being, God must be present to it; according to its mode of being. But being is innermost in each thing and most fundamentally inherent in all things since it is formal in respect of everything found in a thing. Hence if follows that God must be in all things, and most intimately so
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> (*ST*, I, q. 8, a. 1).

The kind of relationship that creatures and human beings have with God as Creator is grasped more fully when compared to the kind of relations they have with one another. Relationships between, for example, human beings are radically different from the (p. 133) Creator/creature relationship for they are always established through or by some mediating act (a hug or a kiss). The relation is established, by what can be called, 'act' to 'act', that is, both persons are engaged in the *act* of kissing and so are related, but, because the relationship is established through some mediating act (a kiss) the two people are never related to one another as each fully is. However, this is not the case in the Creator/creature relationship. While the relationship between God and creatures is equally 'act' to 'act', it is not mediated nor is it a partial expression of their being, but rather the complete and utter expression of their being. The 'act' (the *esse*) by which the creature is a creature only is in 'act' because it is unceasingly related to the 'pure act' that God is as *ipsum esse*—being itself. The Creator/creature relation is an unmediated relationship between the pure act of God as *ipsum esse* and the act, the *esse*, by which the creature is. The creature is totally defined as a creature in this relation for it establishes the creature as created. Moreover, unlike relations between human beings, the Creator/creature relation is perpetual and uninterrupted. Thus, this relation is absolutely immediate (no mediating action), supremely dynamic (pure act to created act), utterly intimate (a relation between God as God is in himself and the creature as it is in itself), and unbreakably enduring (it can never be severed).

Lastly, the above understanding of the act of creation is important in the light of the contemporary discussion concerning evolution. The act of creation and biological evolution are two distinct but interrelated notions—the first philosophical and theological and the second scientific. The act of creation, as seen above, concerns the very existence of beings; that they come to be and continue in existence. Evolution concerns itself with the biological changes that take place in the course of time according to the laws of science of beings that already exist. The notion of creation concerns itself with the philosophical and theological question of why there is something rather than nothing and discerns that the

answer to this enquiry is that there is a being (God) capable of bringing into existence other beings. Evolution concerns itself with what happens, in accordance with the scientific laws of nature, to those beings once they exist—what evolutionary changes they may undergo in the course of time. Thus, there is no inherent conflict between religion and science. Such conflict only arises when philosophy or theology attempts to answer purely scientific issues, such as does the sun revolve around the earth, or when science attempts to address questions that are of a philosophical or theological nature—such as whether or not God exists.

The Trinity and the Act of Creation

In order to appreciate the full significance of what we have just philosophically established concerning the Creator/creature relationship, we must now place it within the context of the Trinity. We want to grasp clearly, that in creating and sustaining the created order, God the Father acts through the Son/Word and in the Holy Spirit. While the Trinity does act *ad extra* as one, as the tradition demands, God never acts generically as the one God, for the one God is a Trinity of persons and must act as such. It must be remembered that, for (p. 134) Aquinas, 'Creation signified actively means the divine action, which is God's essence,' and that God's essence is the same as the Trinity of persons (*ST*, I, q.45, a.3, ad.1). Therefore, God never acts as *ipsum esse* or *actus purus* apart from doing so as a Trinity of persons. Moreover, while the Hebrew tradition sees the one God as Creator, in the light of subsequent Christian revelation the act of creation must be conceived as the act of God in so far as the one God *is* a Trinity of persons. The act of creation is common to all three persons and as such, it is the act of the one God, but this one act must be predicated of them in a manner that is appropriate to each person. Aquinas argues that creation cannot be said properly of any one of the three persons singularly 'since it is common to the whole Trinity'. However, it is not common to the Trinity generically as the one God:

> The divine persons, according to the nature of their procession, have a causality respecting the creation of things … Hence God the Father made the creature through his Word, which is his Son; and through his Love, which is the Holy Spirit. And so the processions of the persons are the type of the production of creatures inasmuch as they include the essential attributes, knowledge and will
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> (*ST*, I, q.45, a.6).

Further, for Aquinas, while all three persons share in the divine nature, they do so 'in a kind of order'. The Son receives his divinity from the Father and the Holy Spirit receives it from the Father and the Son, and therefore this same order is maintained within the act of creation. The term 'Creator 'is attributed to the Father for he receives his power to create from no other, but he creates through the Son, his Word, and through the Holy Spirit, his goodness and love (*ST*, I, q.45, a.6, ad.2).

While Aquinas does not fully articulate the Trinity/creature relationship, we will attempt to do so here. Since the persons of the Trinity share in the pure act of divine being as subsistent relations fully in act, they possess no self-constituting relational potential and so they embrace the singular ability to relate, in the act of creation, the creature to themselves as they are, and are therefore related to the creature as who they are in themselves. Thus, as we saw above in our philosophical enquiry, the Trinity/creature relation is equally absolutely immediate (no mediating action between the persons of the Trinity and the creature), supremely dynamic (the persons of the Trinity fully in act are related to the created act by which the creature is), utterly intimate (a relation between the persons of the Trinity as they truly exist in themselves and the creature as it is in itself), and unbreakably enduring (it can never be severed). Moreover, if we now add to this that the creature involved in this relationship is a human person, it means that the Trinity of persons is actually and fully related to the human person as they are in themselves for the human person is related to them as they are. The relation between the Trinity and a human person is absolutely relational and utterly personal for the human person (the human 'I') only exists as a human person (a human 'I') by being related to the persons (the divine 'I's') of the Trinity in a personal manner—the human 'I' to the 'I' of each divine person.

In this regard, one further very significant point must be made more explicit. Each creature, and more importantly, each human person, is related to each person of the (p. 135) Trinity in a singular manner or according to the proper order within the Trinity, that is, the creature or human person is related to the Father as the Father is, to the Son as the Son is, and to the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit is.

This is why Aquinas could state that the name 'Word' signifies a relation to creatures:

> Word implies relation to creatures. For God by knowing himself, knows every creature. Now the word conceived in the mind is representative of everything that is actually understood. Hence there are in themselves different words for different things which we understand. But because God by one act understands himself and all things, his one only Word is expressive not only of the Father, but of all creation. And as the knowledge of God is only cognitive as regards God, whereas as regards creatures, it is both cognitive and operative, so the Word of God is only expressive of what is in God the Father, but is both expressive and operative of creatures; and therefore it is said (Ps. 33:9): 'He spoke, and they were made'; because in the Word is implied the operative idea of what God makes
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> (*ST*, I, q.34, a.3).

God the Father is the author of creation not only because he knows the whole of creation in his Word, but also because he creates what is known in the Word through the Word. Thus, creation is related to the Father not only as known in the Word, but it is also related to the Father through the Word. Moreover, the Word is related to creation not only as the one in whom the Father knows creation, but also as the one through whom creation comes to be. Creation, then, is related to the Word not only as the one in whom it is

known by the Father, but also as the one through whom it is created. The Father's knowledge of creation is the most thorough, dynamic, and intimate, for he knows creation in the very act of begetting his Son or speaking his Word. Thus, he knows creation in the very same act by which he knows himself—through the Word (see *ST*, I, q.14, a.8).

Aquinas similarly states concerning the Holy Spirit:

> The Father loves not only the Son, but also himself and us, by the Holy Spirit … Hence, as the Father speaks himself and every creature by his begotten Word, inasmuch as the Word *begotten* adequately represents the Father and every creature; so he loves himself and every creature by the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit proceeds as the love of the primal goodness whereby the Father loves himself and every creature
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> (*ST*, I, q.37, a.2, ad.3).

As the Father knows the whole of creation in the Word and so creates through the Word, so the Father loves not only his Son but also the whole of creation in the Holy Spirit, and it is because of this love (in this Spirit) that he creates it through his Word. As the Father lovingly begets his Son in the Spirit so the Father lovingly creates, in the same Spirit, through his Word. Thus, creatures participate in the same intimate, passionate, divine love of the Spirit in which the Father and Son love one another, and so are related to the Father and to the Son in the same passionate love of the Spirit.

(p. 136) We clearly perceive now the awesome truth that because creatures, especially human persons, are, in the act of creation, related to the persons of the Trinity as they are in their own subsistent relations, and so are related to each person of the Trinity in a specific and proper manner, they are assumed into the very mystery of the Trinity itself. Thus, the act of creation mirrors, though imperfectly, the processions within the Trinity. 'It is evident that relation to the creature is implied both in the Word and in the proceeding Love, as it were in a secondary way, inasmuch as the divine truth and goodness are a principle of understanding and loving all creatures' (*ST*, I, q.37, a.2, ad.3). If the act of creation establishes such an intimate and dynamic relationship between the persons of the Trinity and human beings, how much more intimate and dynamic must be the relationship established by grace!

To confirm the absolute love of God for creation one further point must be made concerning the Trinity. Aquinas states that there are two reasons why knowledge of the divine persons is necessary:

> [Firstly,] it was necessary for the right idea of creation. The fact of saying that God made all things by his Word excludes the error of those who say that God produced things by necessity. When we say that in him there is a procession of love, we show that God produced creatures not because he needed them, nor because of any other extrinsic reason, but on account of the love of his own goodness
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> (*ST*, I, q.32, a.1, ad.3).

That we needed a knowledge of the Trinity in order to have a proper understanding of creation seems, at first sight, a rather strange argument, yet it is one of Aquinas's great insights. The lack of such knowledge and its consequences were readily exemplified in the various pagan traditions and Greek philosophies. The pagan gods needed creatures for their own happiness, and even within Platonic emanationism and Stoic pantheism the world was a necessary correlative to God. Even the Jewish people, despite their belief in the One Creator God, were not immune from pagan influences, as their history manifests. However, the revelation that God is a Trinity establishes the ontological independent transcendence of God in that God, as a Trinity of persons, is already self-fulfilled both by way of knowledge and of love. The Father knows himself perfectly in his Word and loves himself perfectly in the Holy Spirit. This does not imply a selfish, self-centred, and self-contained deity, but the exact opposite. The transcendent independence of the Trinity, as wholly other, allows the act of creation to be a sheer act of the Trinity's loving goodness and freedom. Because the persons have no need of self-fulfilment, they are motivated solely by their beneficent and altruistic love to bring others into existence and so bestow on them their goodness. Commenting on Dionysius, Aquinas states:

> Divine love did 'not' allow 'him to remain in himself without fruit", that is, without the production of creatures, but love 'moved him to operate according' to a most excellent mode of operation according as he produced all things in being (*esse*). For (p. 137) from love of his goodness it proceeded that he willed to pour out and to communicate his goodness to others, insofar as it is possible, namely by way of similitude, and that his goodness did not remain in him, but flowed out into others
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> (*De Divinis Nominibus*, IV, lect. 9 [§409]).

Conclusion: Creation Possesses an Eternal End

This essay has focused on the Christian understanding of the one God as a Trinity of persons and the act of creation. Nonetheless, in bringing beings into existence the Trinity had a purpose—and end in view—especially for human beings. The Father desired that human beings would become his children after the manner of his own eternal Son and that this would be achieved through the transformative power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Creation has an eternal purpose. There is to be a new heaven and a new earth, and human beings are to be new creations in Christ. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

> Since God could create everything out of nothing, he can also, through the Holy Spirit, give spiritual life to sinners by creating a pure heart in them and bodily life to the dead through the Resurrection. God 'gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist' (Rom. 4:17). And since God was able to make light shine in darkness by his Word, he can also give the light of faith to those who do not yet know him

(*CCC* 298).

Suggested Reading

On the subject of this chapter see also *CCC* 279-324.

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The Trinity’s Loving Act of Creation

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Evil, Suffering, and Original Sin

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For early Christians, the revelation of Jesus Christ brought more than hope and ecstatic expectation. It also sharpened their sense of the disjunction between who we are and who we are meant to be. Working backwards from their experience of the risen Christ, they came to see Christ's death and resurrection as proof not only of God's love but also of the existential need for a saviour. Gradually, early Christian reflection coalesced into the doctrine of the fall or the doctrine of original sin. The Catholic theological tradition has always embraced this doctrine as a necessary tool for balancing appreciation for the goodness of creation with unblinking realism about the human condition. Its precise theological formulation, however, has varied considerably over the centuries. This chapter discusses the historical origins of Catholic teaching, the classical synthesis solidified by the Council of Trent, and recent developments in theology and magisterial teaching.

Keywords: evil, suffering, original sin, fall, limbo, evolution, Adam, Eve, Augustine, Trent

Introduction

THE world has its problems and so do we; that much is obvious. But for the Christian something far from obvious is also true: the world as we know it is not what God intended. Things have gone tragically wrong. The world has been corrupted by sin and only through Christ can we hope to attain our true destiny. Paul sums up our situation vividly: 'We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies' (Rom. 8:22–23).

For the early Christians, the revelation of Jesus Christ brought more than hope and eschatological expectation. It also sharpened their sense of the disjunction between who we are and who we were meant to be. Working backwards from their experience of the risen Christ, they came to see Christ's death and resurrection as proof not only of God's love but also of our existential need for a saviour. Gradually, early Christian reflection coa-

lesced into what came to be known as the doctrine of the fall or the doctrine of original sin. The Catholic theological tradition has always embraced this doctrine as a necessary tool for balancing appreciation for the goodness of creation with unblinking realism about the human condition. Its precise theological formulation, however, has varied considerably over the centuries. This chapter discusses the historical origins of Catholic teaching, the classical synthesis solidified by the Council of Trent, and recent developments in theology and magisterial teaching.

(p. 140) Historical Origins of Catholic Teaching

According to Genesis, God created Adam and Eve good, indeed very good; then they sinned and were expelled from paradise and became subject to suffering and death. The story of Adam and Eve has always played a central role in Christian reflection on the tragic dimensions of our condition. Yet until the post-exilic period, there is no evidence that the Jewish people read Genesis as positing a historical rupture, with humanity existing in one state and then after sin existing in another. Gradually, however, some exegetical traditions came to interpret the story of Adam and Eve as pointing to an actual event in humanity's distant past. These exegetical traditions surface in later books of the Old Testament. 'From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die' (Sir. 25:24), writes Sirach. Likewise, the Book of Wisdom claims that God created us for incorruption, 'but through the devil's envy death entered the world' (Wis. 2:24). Similar readings of Genesis appear in extracanonical Jewish writings such as the Book of Jubilees, 2 Enoch, 2 Baruch, and 4 Ezra. 'O Adam, what have you done?' Ezra asks, 'For though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants' (4 Ezra 7:118; compare 2 Bar. 48:42). Likewise, although he sometimes reads Genesis in allegorical terms, Philo of Alexandria (c.25BC–c.AD50) also posits a historical rupture in the early history of humanity.

The New Testament continues this interpretative tradition. In the Gospels, Jesus alludes to a rupture in the human condition in his teaching on marriage and divorce. After commenting on the creation accounts in Genesis, he says, 'For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so' (Matt. 19:8), implying that the human condition deteriorated significantly after sin entered human history. Paul's teaching is more explicit. He states that death came into the world through sin (Rom. 5:12–19; 1 Cor. 15:20–26), and that 'as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive' (1 Cor. 15:22). Other New Testament letters offer complementary readings of Genesis (2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:12–15), and 2 Peter and Jude mention the fall of the angels (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6).

Adam and Eve appear frequently in early Christian writings and material culture, suggesting that the story of their sin figured prominently in the early Christian imagination. The rupture reading of Genesis seems to have solidified quickly, and it was often deployed in theological argument. Very often, patristic authors discuss the harmful effects of Adam's sin with a view to refuting gnostic Christians. By attributing suffering and

death to sin, patristic authors were able to affirm the unity of the Old and New Testaments in the face of gnostic Christians who held that the material world was the creation of an evil demiurge. By the early third century, references to death coming from the sin of Adam and Eve had already appeared in the writings of Justin Martyr, Tatian, Theophilus, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. In the late third century, for the first time in extant (p. 141) Christian literature, Methodius of Olympus describes their sin as a 'fall' (Williams 1927: 252–253), an expression that quickly takes hold.

Among patristic authors, a few stand out for their telling of the story. Portraying Adam and Eve as youthful and inexperienced Irenaeus (c.130-202) depicts their sin as an almost inevitable phase of their development, not an act of pure malice, and as something fully incorporated into God's plan of salvation. Nonetheless, Irenaeus traces our experience of bodily death back to their sin (*Adversus haereses*, 3.23). Origen of Alexandria (c.185–254) stands out for different reasons. In an early work, he speculates that our souls pre-existed our bodies and we sinned in a spiritual realm before our birth (*De principiis*, 2.9). In a later work, he acknowledges two explanations for our fallen condition without choosing between them: either we were cast out of paradise with Adam; or in some mysterious way—presumably he is thinking of his spiritual fall idea—we were cast out from paradise individually (*Commentary on Romans*, 5.5). For all his idiosyncrasy, however, Origen explains our current condition with reference to chronologically prior sin. While usually doing the same, Maximus the Confessor (c.580–662) speculates that, counter to the standard narrative, God may have created us subject to corruption and death from the beginning due to his foreknowledge of Adam's sin (*Ambiguum 8*, PG 91:1104AB).

The practice of infant baptism spurred additional reflections about Adam's sin and its effects on his descendants. By the early third century, the practice of infant baptism was widespread. How exactly this came about leaves much room for speculation (see Ferguson 2009: 362–379), but Origen says that the Church received the tradition of baptizing infants from the apostles (*Commentary on Romans*, 5.11). The practice raised many questions in the early Christian community. Origen mentions that Christians often asked why infants were baptized for the remission of sins (*Homilies on Luke*, 14.5). In response, without fully explaining why, Origen affirms that even newborn infants are tainted by sin. Cyprian of Carthage, writing on behalf of a synod of bishops, defended infant baptism along similar lines. In a letter, he explains that infants have contracted death from Adam and that baptism remits not the infants' own sins but the sins of another (*Epistle*s, 64.5). In this historical period, Psalm 51:5 and Job 14:4–5 emerge as important scriptural justifications for infant baptism and the notion of inherited sin more generally; both texts are cited frequently.

In the fourth century, speculation about the fall increases. In the East, authors tend to describe the fall in metaphysical terms. Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa describe Adam's sin as a turn towards non-being that brings corruption in body and soul upon Adam and all his descendants. At the same time, Eastern authors resist the conclusion that infants who die without baptism are necessarily damned. Their condition is problematic but not without hope. In the Latin West, thinking about Adam's sin develops differently. Sharpen-

ing a tradition that traces back to Tertullian and Cyprian, Ambrose speaks about Adam's sin being somehow transmitted to his offspring. Yet though he is more pessimistic than his Eastern counterparts, Ambrose also resists consigning unbaptized infants to hell.

Theological reflection enters a new phase with Augustine (354–430). Toward the end of the fourth century, in his treatise *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, (p. 142) Augustine coins the expression 'original sin' (*peccatum originale*) and lays the groundwork for a new theological synthesis. Augustine developed his synthesis further during the Pelagian controversy, which began in 411 and continued until the end of his life, but the essentials of his position on original sin were already in place by the time it started. Incorporating, but not dependent on a faulty reading of Romans 5:12, Augustine argues that all of us sinned in Adam, and therefore all of us share in his punishment and guilt. Even the offspring of baptized parents are not exempt. In our fallen condition, sexual intercourse always involves excessive and therefore sinful desire. Consequently, parents cannot help transmitting original sin to their offspring in the very act that generates them. For those who would doubt the reality of inherited guilt, Augustine points to the suffering of newborn infants. In his justice, God would only allow infants to suffer if they were guilty. 'They are proved guilty by their misery', he writes (*Opus imperfectum contra Julianum*, 6.27.22). Infants who die without baptism are necessarily damned, though with the mildest punishment.

On the one hand, Augustine's synthesis is deeply traditional. His notion of a historical rupture echoes the unanimous consensus of both Eastern and Western authors, as does his notion of Adam and Eve transmitting their condition to their offspring. With John, everyone agreed that 'if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves' (1 John 1:8) and that our sinful tendencies could be traced back to Adam's sin. Augustine's faulty reading of Romans 5:12 was not original to him, but derives from the *Commentary on Romans* by the writer known as Ambrosiaster (fl. c. 370–380. See Beatrice 2013: 128–141). Likewise, without any reference to Romans 5:12, the idea of our sinning in Adam appears before Augustine in Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hilary, and Ambrose (Lukken 1973: 268–271). Furthermore, others had already proposed sexual union as the means by which Adam's sin was transmitted, partly by reflecting on the Virgin Birth and inferring that it must have played a crucial role in preserving Christ's humanity from any taint of sin (Lukken 1973: 275–277). And like the theologies of all those who had gone before him, Augustine's synthesis is contextualized from beginning to end by his desire to uphold the Creator's goodness in the face of evil and suffering.

On the other hand, Augustine is brilliantly original. Without ceding any ground on the essential goodness of creation, he brings new insight into the tragic dimensions of human life, the limitations of human freedom, and our absolute dependence on God's grace. Even aspects of his synthesis now considered unfortunate show the mark of his brilliance. By arguing that parents transmit sin to their offspring in the very act that generates them, Augustine answers a question bothering his contemporaries (and an objection raised by the Pelagians): namely, how it was that baptized parents cleansed of original sin could transmit its stain to their children. More fatefully, Augustine tackles a question oth-

ers had avoided. Since we believe that every child born into the world has been corrupted by Adam's sin and suffers accordingly, how can we avoid the conclusion that God reckons them guilty and worthy of damnation? Seeing no other option—but not without anxious misgivings (see *Letter 166*, 10)—he closes the circle and makes the deduction his predecessors had resisted. More than anything else, it is this fateful inference that sets his account of original sin apart from any that had preceded it.

(p. 143) The logical coherence and explanatory power of Augustine's position made it the point of departure in Western theology for centuries afterwards. It has influenced Catholic theology on everything from sacramental theology to theories of predestination. Yet Augustine's synthesis never found much traction in the East and even in the West it never found unconditional acceptance. The sifting of his teaching began early. A hundred years after his death, the Second Council of Orange affirmed many aspects of his teaching while remaining notably silent about predestination and the precise mechanism of sin's transmission.

Anselm initiates another important phase of theological development. While working within an Augustinian framework, Anselm interprets Augustine's teaching with a significant innovation. Anselm proposes that original sin is best understood as the privation of original justice. When an animal breaks free of its chains and causes havoc, the problem is that the chains are lacking; in the same way, when we lost original justice through sin, our various appetites lost their harmonizing principle and we become subject to sinful tendencies (*De Conceptu Virginali*, 5).

Thomas Aquinas further develops the idea of original sin as privation. Using the tools of Aristotelian philosophy, he defines original sin as *formally* the privation of original justice and *materially* the internal disorder resulting from this privation (*ST* I–II q.82 a.3). His definition is a plausible interpretation of Augustine, but it subtly displaces Augustine's rhetorical emphasis on internal disorder. It also lays the groundwork for a more optimistic evaluation of the human condition. And while Anselm had defended Augustine's view on the fate of unbaptized infants, Thomas joins a growing chorus of theologians who saw things differently. Using as a wedge Augustine's claim about unbaptized infants suffering only the mildest punishment, Thomas argues that infants who die without baptism do not suffer any pain and even enjoy a kind of natural happiness; being deprived of the beatific vision is their only suffering. With support from Thomas Aquinas and many others, the theory of limbo and the moderate Augustinianism it implied quickly became normative—thus setting the stage for the classical synthesis that would be solidified by the Council of Trent.

Trent and the Classical Synthesis

In response to the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent (1545–1563) promulgated its Decree on Original Sin. To this day, the decree remains the Church's most authoritative magisterial document on the subject of original sin. Its objectives were twofold. On the one hand, the decree aimed to make explicit what had been assumed by Catholic the-

ologians up until this point; on the other hand, it was meant to respond to particular challenges from Reformation theologians. The decree succeeded remarkably well in its objectives. It deliberately avoids points of disagreement among Catholic theologians and its conclusions are limited and circumspect. In fact, its canons borrow much of their substance and even some of their wording from earlier councils, most notably (p. 144) the Second Council of Orange (529) and the Sixteenth Council of Carthage (418). At the same time, the decree differentiated Catholic teaching from the emerging Protestant tradition with precision and clarity. In Catholic theology, its effects were significant and long-lasting. The decree bolstered the moderate Augustinianism that had been developing during the Middle Ages, and it crystallized the classical synthesis assumed by most Catholic theologians until the mid-twentieth century.

Heavily reliant on scholastic theology and especially Thomas Aquinas, the classical synthesis leaves room for variation but nonetheless presents a systematic, comprehensive account of original sin. In the process, the classical synthesis does not confine itself to the sin of Adam and Eve and its transmission; it encompasses everything from metaphysics to eschatology. Furthermore, it assigns original sin a structural priority that it did not have for patristic authors, not even for Augustine. Whereas patristic authors began with the experience of the risen Christ and gradually reasoned to original sin, from the medieval period onward, theologians begin with original sin and then reason their way to other conclusions. In *Cur Deus homo*, for example, Anselm explains the necessity of Christ's crucifixion by reference to original sin. In the structure of his argument, it is not the fact of redemption that comes first, it is the fact of original sin. Likewise, both the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and the Council of Trent discuss original sin before turning to other topics. In the Augsburg Confession, the reformers treat original sin in the second article, immediately after an article on God and without any intervening article on creation. Similarly, although it issued a few other decrees first, the Council of Trent promulgated its Decree on Original Sin in one of its earliest sessions.

The classical synthesis rests on a highly developed metaphysics of evil. Following patristic authors in both East and West, evil is defined as the privation of being and goodness. Evil is parasitic on the good; it has no being of itself. It is the frustration of something's 'natural and due disposition' (*ST* I q.49 a.1). Physical or ontological evils are sometimes compatible with God's intentions. In a material world, old things must pass away for the new to take their place, and the possibility of corruption grounds the possibility of growth and dynamism. Moral evil, however, is always against God's will. Furthermore, moral evil always involves ontological evil, because moral evil always involves the choice for something counter to the agent's own good. As such, moral evil always leads to the agent's ontological disintegration. Yet moral evil does not merely lead to ontological evil. As the frustration of our inclination towards unlimited goodness (that is, our intellectual appetite), moral evil frustrates the inner structure of our being and thus constitutes a species of ontological evil in its own right.

Within this metaphysical context, the classical synthesis discusses original sin under two aspects: *peccatum originale originans*, the primal sin of Adam and Eve, and *peccatum originale originatum*, the condition of original sin we inherit from them. The primal sin is described in the context of a narrative. Adam and Eve are created free of any taint of sin, constituted in justice and holiness. (In the first canon of its Decree on Original Sin, Trent uses the word 'constituted' rather than 'created' to sidestep a disagreement about whether they were created in holiness from the first moment of their existence.) The communion with God that they have through grace preserves their interior psychic (p. 145) harmony, enabling them to avoid sin easily and naturally. Likewise, even though their bodies are mortal by nature, the preternatural gifts spare them suffering and death. Had they refrained from sinning, it is often speculated, they would have been translated to heaven at the end of their earthly lives and their bodies glorified (see Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum*, 2.27; Athanasius *De Incarnatione*, 3; Augustine, *De bono coniugii,* 2.2, and *De Genesi ad Litteram*, 6.23–28; Aquinas, *ST* I q.102 a.4). Whether animals were also spared death before sin is a different matter; theologians disagreed on this question. For example, while Bede (672–735) and the *Summa fratris Alexandri* maintained that animals did not eat each other in paradise (Bede, *Commentary on Genesis,* 1:29–30; *Summa fratris Alexandri* II q.93 memb.2), Thomas Aquinas held that they did (*ST* I q.96 a.1 ad2).

In the event, after being created in a state of justice and holiness, Adam and Eve are tempted by the devil and choose to sin. Their sin, usually described in terms of pride and envy, changes them body and soul for the worse. Without God's grace and the preternatural graces, they begin to unravel. They begin to experience interior disorder, suffering and death, and mutual conflict. Through propagation and not merely bad example, they transmit to their offspring 'the sin which is the death of the soul'—understood primarily as the absence of divine grace, not something positive adhering to the soul—along with their physical and psychological infirmities (Decree on Original Sin, Canons 2–3). Theologians defend the justice of this transmission in different ways, but Augustine's reading of Romans 5:12 is often in the background.

Due to the original sin we inherit from Adam and Eve, we share in the same penalties they suffered: deprivation of divine grace, psychological disorder, bodily suffering, and ultimately death. The disordered desires and sinful inclinations that characterize our fallen condition are collectively termed *concupiscentia*, or concupiscence. (Confusingly, the Latin word *concupiscentia* literally means desire, and it can also be used in a neutral way, apart from its technical theological sense—thus regrettably blurring the difference between desire and sinful desire.) While concupiscence is identified with the law of sin Paul writes about in Romans, it is not something positively infused into human nature. It is what happens when the restraint of original justice is removed (see *ST* I–II q.82 a.1 ad3). The power of concupiscence is such that no one can entirely avoid sin. Those with a share in divine grace can always avoid deadly sin, that is, sin which separates us from God, but even with divine grace no one can lead a completely sinless life. Nonetheless, though our nature is wounded by original sin and its effects, it is not entirely depraved; sin has tarnished but not eradicated the image of God. Sin wounds our nature, but we do not cease to be human, and so neither original sin nor actual sin can ever completely eradicate our

positive inclinations and our potential for virtue (*ST* I–II q.85 a.1–2). Furthermore, in contrast to Martin Luther, the reality of concupiscence, while seen as closely associated with original sin and inclining us towards sin, is not identified with sin itself (Decree on Original Sin, 5).

According to the classical synthesis, we experience two kinds of evil. Drawing on terminology that traces back to Tertullian in *Ad Marcionem* 2.14, the classical synthesis divides evil into *malum culpae*, the evil of fault, and *malum poenae*, the evil of punishment. (p. 146) Moral evil is *malum culpae*; the pain and suffering of our fallen condition is *malum poenae*. While God is never the author of moral evil, he is the author of punishment—not in the modern sense of punishment, which tends to see punishment mainly in terms of retributive justice, but in the ancient, holistic sense of punishment, which emphasizes the role of correction and guidance. God does not necessarily will each instance of suffering we experience under the aspect of punishment, let alone intervene to bring it about, but he did will to create a world where our sins have consequences and where we can therefore learn from our mistakes. And since moral evil always leads to ontological evil and therefore suffering, moral evil necessarily brings about its own opportunity for conversion. In other words, there is a self-correcting mechanism built into creation. The remedial nature of suffering was noted early. Irenaeus, for example, argues that God arranged things so that our own apostasy would bring us instruction and healing, citing Jeremiah 2:19 in support (*Adversus haereses* 4.37.7).

Recent Developments

Over the past century, Catholic theology of original sin has undergone dramatic development. Much of this development happened in response to evolutionary theory. The evidence that the first humans were not created immediately by God posed a serious challenge to traditional understandings of original sin, as did the evidence favouring polygenism (descent from multiple pairs of simultaneously existing human ancestors) over monogenism (descent from a single pair of human ancestors). Other factors have played an important role, most notably theological *resourcement*, ecumenical dialogue, and the renewal of ecclesiology, but by far evolutionary theory has been the most significant catalyst.

Ecclesial authorities initially resisted evolutionary theory, but cautiously; ecclesial interventions were few and far between. The first major papal intervention came only in 1950, almost a century after Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, with Pius XII's encyclical *Humani generis*. Its judgement on evolution was largely positive. The encyclical did not pronounce on evolution one way or the other, but it affirmed that the idea of evolution was compatible with Catholic doctrine. There was a significant caveat, however. The faithful could not embrace polygenism, because it was not apparent how polygenism could be reconciled with Catholic teaching about original sin (*Humani generis*, 36–37).

The encyclical had great influence on Catholic theology. On the one hand, without making any judgement on its scientific merits, it brought evolutionary theory firmly into the Catholic theological mainstream; on the other hand, it excluded polygenism from the category of theologically acceptable hypotheses. The critical note on polygenism and original sin was taken as a correction to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955) above all. He had proposed that the evolutionary mechanism was a positive force driving creation toward its apogee, and that suffering and evil were unfortunate but necessary aspects of (p. 147) the evolutionary process, thus calling into question not only monogenism but the idea of death coming into the world through a primal sin. Nonetheless, even at the time, the encyclical's cautious wording was widely seen as leaving the door open to polygenism. A few years after *Humani generis*, for example, Karl Rahner would make the case that even though monogenism was 'theologically certain', Catholic teaching had not definitively excluded polygenism (Rahner 1961).

Meanwhile, in 1946, Henri de Lubac published his book *Surnaturel*. Contrary to the reigning neo-scholastic opinion, the book argued that human nature was intrinsically oriented to the beatific vision and that this had been the opinion of Thomas Aquinas. This seemingly innocuous claim had great implications for theological anthropology. Among other things, it made the theory of limbo difficult to justify. According to common understanding, unbaptized infants in limbo enjoyed a natural happiness that was real but limited. Yet if our nature only finds fulfilment in the beatific vision, then there is no such thing as natural happiness apart from union with God, and unbaptized infants in limbo, through no fault of their own, would be eternally frustrated in the fulfilment of their God-given desires—a result theologically incompatible with God's goodness and devastating for the theory of limbo. The book immediately sparked fierce controversy, and though *Humani generis* 26 was widely read as contradicting de Lubac's position on the natural desire for God—a reading he disputed, with good reason, until his death—the issues he raised contributed to a sea change in Catholic thinking about original sin.

Against this background, with questions about evolution and original sin on the forefront of people's minds, the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) brought the conversation to the next level. *Gaudium et spes* reaffirmed Catholic teaching on original sin in two separate passages. The first passage speaks about humanity abusing its freedom from the very beginning of history despite having been constituted in righteousness (*GS* 13); the second passage describes bodily death as something from which we would have been immune had we not sinned (*GS* 18). Neither passage touches on evolution and monogenism, but in the charged theological atmosphere of 1965, only fifteen years after *Humani generis*, the reaffirmation of traditional teaching was significant.

In another section, *Gaudium et spes* declared that our ultimate vocation is one and divine, and therefore we ought to believe that God offers to everyone the possibility of sharing in Christ's paschal mystery (*GS* 22; see also *LG* 16, *NA* 1, *GS* 19). This declaration was taken as a vindication of Henri de Lubac's position on the natural desire for God (the fact that de Lubac had helped draft *Gaudium et spes* gave additional grounds for this impression). Just as his theological opponents had feared, the notion that everyone is called to the

same supernatural destiny shattered the classical synthesis. The most obvious casualty was the theory of limbo. After the Second Vatican Council, without ever having been mentioned by a conciliar document, and despite having been the common teaching for centuries, limbo disappeared overnight from Catholic theology and catechesis. Its sudden disappearance testifies not only to the influence of conciliar teaching, but also to long-simmering dissatisfaction with the idea of limbo, something that, after all, had been introduced to ameliorate Augustine's position, not on its own merits.

(p. 148) After the council, Catholic theology of original sin entered a period of crisis. With the classical synthesis no longer tenable as an integral unity, there was no way back and the way forward was not clear. There was general agreement about *peccatum originale originatum*, in terms of its characteristic features, but there was no consensus about *peccatum originale originans*. Some theologians continued to affirm that our current situation somehow traced to a sin at the dawn of human history. Other theologians, many of them influenced by Teilhard de Chardin, concluded that original sin was not a doctrine about a historical event, but rather about the suffering and evil that necessarily accompany creation and especially created freedom. Paul VI (1963–78) took early note of the latter trend, particularly as it surfaced in the Dutch Catechism of 1966. In response, he made a point of speaking about a primal sin in historical terms, most notably in his *Credo of the People of God*, which he professed publicly in 1968 during the concluding liturgy of the Year of Faith.

For some years after the council, intense theological conversation about original sin continued, but without much resolution; if anything, theological reflection became more fragmented (see Connor 1968; Vandervelde 1975; McDermott 1977; Wiedenhofer 1991). By the early 1980s, perhaps in recognition that things had reached an impasse, fewer publications about original sin were appearing. Then, with the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (*CCC*) in 1993, the conversation entered its next phase. The catechism devotes a substantial amount of attention to original sin and as the most significant magisterial intervention on the subject since the Second Vatican Council, the section on original sin immediately became an important point of reference for Catholic theology.

The catechism's approach to original sin has several notable features. On the one hand, it continues to speak about a primal sin in historical terms. On the other hand, it incorporates many of the developments of the post-conciliar period, and it presents traditional teaching in a context new to Catholic magisterial documents. In keeping with one of the key advances of twentieth-century theological reflection, the catechism makes a point of framing original sin in a Christological context, emphasizing that Catholic teaching about original sin is subordinate to Catholic teaching about redemption (*CCC* 388–389). It describes original sin as privation, not something positive adhering in the soul, and explains that original sin is sin only in an analogous sense (*CCC* 404–405). The catechism also affirms that the mercy of God allows us to hope for the salvation of unbaptized infants (*CCC* 1261). What it does not say is also significant. There is no mention of monogenism or lim-

bo, and it avoids language that could be construed as implying an Augustinian transmission of guilt.

The immediate reception of the catechism's treatment of original sin among Catholic theologians was mixed. Some appreciated the magisterial intervention into a discussion that had become confusing and opaque. Others found it disappointing and excessively bound to traditional formulations, especially in its teaching about a historical sin. This reaction seems to have been anticipated. In his introduction to the catechism, Christoph Schönborn, its general editor, reveals that the segment on original sin had been considered particularly delicate and that a special commission 'had occupied itself at length' with its formulation. He then goes on to say: 'It cannot be the task of the Catechism to represent novel theological theses which do not belong to the assured patrimony of the (p. 149) Church's faith. Consequently, the Catechism limits itself to setting forth the sure doctrine of the faith' (Ratzinger and Schönborn 1994, 71).

It is indeed difficult to see how the catechism could have incorporated developments of doctrine other than those it already does. Whether or not further developments are possible, the obstacles are formidable. No alternative constructions of original sin have yet gained anything approaching consensus among Catholic theologians, and the most obvious reading of Romans and the unanimous patristic witness connect the tragic aspects of our condition to a primal sin. And whereas questions about evolution and monogenism are relatively recent and as yet have not been addressed by a church council, the question of whether death came through sin was asked early and answered forcefully: Caelestius's claim that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned played an important role in sparking the Pelagian controversy in 411, and it was refuted by the Council of Carthage in 418.

Over the past century, Catholic theology of original sin has made very significant progress. After a painfully slow process lasting centuries, the harder edges of Augustine's synthesis have finally been set aside. Meanwhile, without losing the metaphysical precision of scholastic theology, Augustine's insights into the human condition and our absolute dependence on God's grace have been recast in a fundamentally Eastern mode, so that original sin is now understood in emphatically ontological terms. And through advances in historical-critical exegesis, theologians can now look to evolutionary theory as a positive resource, not merely something to be accommodated. Yet despite these advances, many urgent questions await resolution.

Suggested Reading

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NOTE: All scripture translations from the Revised Standard Version; all other primary source translations are my own.

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The Trinity

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter introduces Catholic Trinitarian theology in dogmatic and historical perspective. The first section of the chapter concerns the principal patristic developments and the limitations of the relevant conciliar and dogmatic statements. The next section of the chapter considers and reasseses the speculative intent and decisive contribution of Thomas Aquinas's Trinitarian theology, particularly with regard to the concept of the divine person. The chapter then offers a summary of the main themes of the contemporary renewal in the study of the Trinity. Finally, the chapter suggests new paths for a fruitful dialogue between Trinitarian doctrine and contemporary philosophy in the field of ethics.

Keywords: monotheism, Trinity, Thomas Aquinas, person, ethics, vocation, reciprocity

THIS chapter will present Catholic theological reflection on the mystery of the Trinity. It commences with a synthesis of the major patristic developments and the milestones of the dogmatic statements of the Councils, before turning to the speculative intention and decisive contribution of Thomas Aquinas, centred on the development of a functioning conception of the divine person. Following a brief summary of the major trends in the contemporary renewal of the study of the Trinity, the chapter traces new possibilities for a fruitful dialogue between Trinitarian doctrine and contemporary philosophy, with particular reference to the field of ethics.

The Trinitarian Influence on the Christian Life

The mystery of the Trinity is not primarily an overly complex point of Christian belief, the result of excessive speculation. At its most basic, the God of the Trinity is the One who, under the influence of grace, is encountered at the heart of the Christian life. We live from the Trinity, and it informs our practices in terms of the celebration of the Sacraments, personal and community prayer, and loving meditation on the Word of God—especially when the Word which is heard leads to loving desire and belonging. Prayer to the Trinity is present everywhere in the liturgy, from the words which accompany the sign of the Cross, Baptism in the one Name of the Three, in the greeting at the start of Mass (cf.

2 Cor. 13: 13), and in the structure of the Eucharistic prayers which are addressed to the Father by the Son in the Spirit and conclude with the final doxology (p. 152) to the Three. There is also a votive Mass of the Trinity (introduced at the start of the tenth century), and a feast of the Trinity (instituted in 1334). Theologically speaking, the Trinity is in no way a problem to be resolved, or a difficulty to shed light on, some kind of impossible equation between three and one. To affirm the Trinity means that the revelation accomplished by Jesus the Christ places his disciples in relationship with God himself, and that the concrete form of that revelation truly corresponds to the divine identity—the Trinitarian configuration of God in himself.

However, God's Trinitarian revelation may be subject to several disfigurements or misunderstandings. Historically, Trinitarian reflection has been motivated principally by the pastoral desire to avoid errors or rationalist reductions, and to ensure that the theological attraction of the Trinitarian God is as fully appreciated as possible. Theologians were led to work on this much earlier than artists and thus, while Trinitarian debates emerged in the first three Christian centuries, there was an almost total absence of images of God or Christ. The early rejection of any representation or image of God, inherited from Judaism, was long influential. It is not until the third century that we have some indications in the writings of the Fathers concerning various pagan symbols which were formally forbidden, and others that might be Christianized, such as the dove, fish, or anchor. But Christianity's expressive dynamism grows out of the internal vitality of its faith in the Incarnation. Although the figure of Christ, whose face is not yet individualized, is painted on some Gospel scenes, the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension are not represented in the earliest Christian art. The cult of the cross only develops from 340, and at that point it is still the glorious, or eschatological, cross, without the crucified body. Trinitarian images remain rare and elusive for a long time. The first full images of the Baptism of Christ, which include the dove of the Spirit and the hand of the Father, only appear during the second half of the sixth century (see Boespflug, 2008; Jensen 2005).

The Trinity and Faith in the One God

Contrary to the commonly held view that, with regard to the Trinity, the Scriptures and dogma are significantly at odds, the first Christians professed faith in the Trinity, not as a term or a concept, but as the living fellowship of God, Christ, and the Spirit in their coworking of Salvation. First of all, we should not seek only to isolate particular extracts from the New Testament in order to define God's Trinitarian action or identity (even though some passages do this in quite striking ways, e.g. Matt. 28:19, Gal. 4: 4–7, Rom. 8:9–10, 1 Cor. 12:4–6, 2 Cor. 13:13, Eph. 4:3–6). More radically, it is the very identity of Jesus Christ which is revealed as Trinitarian throughout the New Testament, through all the main events of his life, his ministry, his Passion, his Resurrection, and the day of Pentecost. Jesus can only be identified as what he is personally, the beloved Son on mission, if he is related to the Father who sends him and to the Spirit who will spread the mission (from the crucifixion and then after Pentecost). The revelation of the Trinity is (p. 153)

thus originally contained in the being and mission of Jesus, whose identity is fundamentally one of relationship.

Professing faith in a single God in three persons, especially in the light of contemporary usage, may seem to indicate that we think of God's unity as simply a collective, to be compared to an association of three human individuals. If this were the case, the Jewish Christians, astonishingly, would have left behind the Jewish monotheism which was natural to them. But from the outset, Christian belief understood itself as part of the continuing revelation of the One God to Israel, despite the obvious discontinuity between Christian and Jewish belief—Jewish faith not being Trinitarian. Of course, the Hebrew Scriptures contain various ways of expressing God's action and presence: God Most-High, his travelling Glory, the Word, Wisdom, the Spirit, and so on. In the retrospective light of Trinitarian faith, these different modes of divine action can appear to be anticipated approximations. But Jewish tradition does not go beyond affirming modes of presence or manifestation. It has no reason to postulate subjects of existence which are quite distinct. Only that revelation accomplished through the complete journey of Christ the Saviour demands that Christians recognize a truly Trinitarian difference, not only in divine action, but above all, in God himself.

Several New Testament authors made use of the most distinctive characteristics of Jewish monotheism to express Jesus' relationship to God, and to profess his divinity. In this way, some of the distinguishing features of the Lord in Isaiah 40–55 are deliberately transferred onto Jesus Christ, in the boldest way possible, with a view to including him in the single divine identity (see Bauckham 2008). The sacrificed and victorious Lamb, for instance, is jointly worshipped with Him who sits on the celestial throne, and is addressed by the same doxologies which had previously been addressed to God alone (see Revelation 4–5, compare with Isa. 6:1; 52:13). In such circumstances, for the early Christians, professing faith in Jesus as Lord involved joining him to God's unicity. This theological *tour de force* demonstrates that the New Testament authors did not understand Christian faith as a transgression against post-Exilic Judaism's strict monotheism, but as its eschatological accomplishment. In the light of this original movement in nascent Christianity, contemporary Christianity can and must affirm itself to be fully monotheistic. By joining the Christological profession of faith to a strict and universalist monotheism, Trinitarian faith presents itself as the completion of the acknowledgement of the divine unicity.

Patristic Developments

In Christian antiquity, the emergence of a range of erroneous doctrines led the Fathers to a desire for orthodoxy in the Trinitarian faith, initially during the third century, then at the Council of Nicaea in 325, and finally at the Council of Constantinople in 381. The first of these errors, known as Sabellianism or Modalism, presented the Trinity as simply a trinitarian rhythm through which the one God manifested himself without him being (p. 154) truly Three eternally and in himself. The One God had manifested himself progressively as Father, then as Son, and then as Spirit, without these differences being real

in God himself. This doctrine was refuted in particular by Tertullian in his treatise *Against Praxeas* in which he emphasized that the Trinitarian disposition is eternal in God. Tertullian also made ingenious use of expressive images to offer an approximate representation of the continuity of substance (*substantia*) apparent through emanation, such as, for example, between the sun, a ray of light, and warmth (e.g. *Prax.* 2. 3–4; 9. 1–3; 12. 6–7).

The second error, frequently called Arianism after Arius, one of its initial proponents, suggested that the Son was superior to all of creation, without, however, being properly equal to God. He also argued that God was not 'Father' from all eternity, but only became so when he begot the Son with a view to creating everything through him. This had a dual impact. After many ups and downs, this doctrine was condemned at Nicaea as contrary to the Catholic faith, in the statement that the Son is *consubstantial* with the Father, that is, *of the same nature* (*homoousios*) as the Father. In the wake of Nicaea, whose reception was slow and complicated, St Athanasius of Alexandria, in his *Orations Against the Arians*, drew up a Trinitarian theology based on the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father, which cohered with this faith.

The third error, finally, is frequently depicted as Pneumatomachian or semi-Arian: in a second stage of controversy some theologians presented the Spirit as third in a hierarchical ordering of divine beings. Athanasius's *Letters to Serapion*, and Basil of Caesarea's *On The Holy Spirit*, argued from the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit had the same dignity as Father and Son, even though the Spirit was not directly described as God. From this came developments that reached their conclusion in 381 at the Council of Constantinople. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed from that meeting affirms that the Spirit is Lord, is life-giving, and is jointly adored and glorified with the Father and the Son. All these characteristics clearly attest to the divinity of the Holy Spirit, equal to the divinity of Father and Son.

In the meantime, and after many false starts, Greek and Latin Trinitarian vocabularies gradually (around the year 362) agreed on acceptable ways of indicating what was *shared* in divinity, using the terms *ousia, substantia, essentia, physis*, or *natura*, while what was *proper* to each of the persons was described by the distinct terms *hypostatis* (or *prosōpon*) and *persona*. This patristic and conciliar process came to a close towards the end of the fourth century (Ayres 2004). Let us summarize the principal points. In the first place, the distinction of the persons (Father, Son, Spirit) was located within the single divine nature. Everything attributed to God that is common to God (holiness, power, glory, etc.) also belongs equally to each divine person, without any division of the divinity. The three persons are irreducible among themselves: the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, and the Spirit is quite distinct from the other two. In the second place, there is a real order between the three divine persons, which is not simply the result of our mode of knowing. This order is founded on the principle of origination; the Son and the Spirit eternally receive the divine nature from the Father. Such an order of nature does not imply in principle any inequality or subordination in terms of degrees of being. In the third place, following this order of origin, each of the three divine persons (p. 155) is distinguished from the other two in a relational manner: to be the Father means to be the Fa-

ther of the Son; to be the Son means to be the Son of the Father; to be the Spirit means to proceed from the Father and belong to the Son. It is the relationship (*pros ti* or *schesis*) between one person and another that best describes their proper 'mode of existence' (*tropos hyparxeōs*) to the extent that they mutually distinguish themselves from one another. The relational difference between the divine persons is not in contradiction with the undivided unity of substance they have in common. In the fourth place, the three divine persons remain inseparable in their being and in their action, whether that is in creation, the history of salvation, or the sanctification of the faithful. They remain eternally one in the other according to an intimate *perichōresis*, to be understood as mutual immanence, correlativity, and communion (Durand 2005).

These clarifications are the doctrinal consequences of a lengthy process of theological debate. They were decisive in supporting a Trinitarian reading of the Scriptures. This is demonstrated in the profession of Trinitarian faith spelled out by St Augustine at the start of his *On the Trinity*. He is careful to place the divine unity at the start and the end of his formula of faith, but also to spell out how the persons are eternally distinguished from one another, and then to refer to the events of salvation history in which each one of the Three was manifest in his own way, appropriate to his action:

> All the Catholic interpreters of the divine books, both the Old and the New Testament, whom I have been able to read, who wrote before me about the Trinity, which is God, had this purpose in view: to teach in accordance with the Scriptures that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit constitute a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality. Therefore, they are not three gods but One god; although the Father has begotten the Son, and, therefore, he who is Father is not the Son; and the Son was begotten by the Father and, therefore, he who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and the Son, and He Himself is also co-equal with the Father and the Son and belongs to the unity of the Trinity. Not that this same Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary and was crucified and buried under Pontius Pilate, nor rose again on the third day, nor ascended into heaven, but only the Son. Nor that this Trinity descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove when he was baptized; nor that this same Trinity on Pentecost, after the Lord's Ascension, when a sound came from heaven as if a mighty wind were blowing, settled upon each one of them with parted tongues of fire, but only the Holy Spirit. Nor that this same Trinity said from heaven: 'Thou art my Son,' either when Jesus was baptized by John or when the three disciples were with Him on the mount, nor when the voice sounded saying: 'I have glorified and I shall glorify again,' but this was the word of the Father only, spoken to the Son; although the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as they are inseparable, so they work inseparably. This is also my faith, since it is the Catholic faith.
>
> (*Trin*. 1.4.7; Augustine 1963: 10–11)

Starting from such foundations, Augustine and his successors could develop a sober yet rigorous ecclesiastical discourse on the Trinitarian faith. Within the limits of an (p. 156) introduction such as this, it is now appropriate to turn to the contribution of Thomas Aquinas, which is so decisive for Catholic Trinitarian theology.

Thomas Aquinas's Decisive Contribution

St Thomas Aquinas distinguished two modes in the knowledge of God, one proceeding from the natural ability of human reason, and the other proceeding from Christian revelation. He did not see these two modes as being in competition. Unfortunately, from a historical perspective, Thomas's understanding of the complementary nature of these two modes was a temporary point of equilibrium. Following Aquinas, there was an increasing tendency to separate the two modes, until natural reason and theological faith were considered not to be competent to deal with the same subjects. Faith became characterized as a submission to authority, by its ability to allow the irrational and contradictory. Prior to Aquinas, the two modes were easily mixed, with a desire to understand the Trinity according to the logic of 'necessary reasons'. Thus for Richard of Saint-Victor (1110–1173), asserting divine unity led by way of necessity to the logical assertion of plurality in God, for God's beatitude and joy demanded that the love between Father and Son be open to a third party (*Trin.* 1. 1–4). Thus an a priori argument supported the premise of Trinitarian faith. The same structure of theological thought was also developed by St Bonaventure (1221–1274), who not only employed it starting from divine perfection and beatitude, but also from simplicity and ultimately from the primacy (*primitas*) which gives reason to all fruitfulness: the first is also necessarily a fruitful origin (*myst. Trin.* q. 8).

Aquinas gave theology a dual task, to perceive and explain the truths of faith, and to avoid errors encountered on the way. In this light, speculative theology may be considered a form of 'spiritual exercise', in which the mind grasps and deepens, according to its own ability, and by means of similarities drawn from creatures, some 'little drops' of the divine science, leading to a profound spiritual joy (*SCG* I, 8). The intention of speculative Trinitarian theology, which is both contemplative and defensive, determines right usage in Thomas's theology.

In the *Summa Theologiae*, the treatise *De Deo* is subdivided into three parts: i) concerning the divine essence (*ST* I, q. 2–26); ii) concerning the distinction between the divine persons (*ST* I, q. 27–43); iii) concerning the way in which creatures proceed from God (*ST* I, q. 44–119). Since it is generally poorly understood, we should clarify Thomas's intentions in ordering his reflections into those which consider God in his essence (so-called *De Deo Uno*) and those which consider the distinctions between the divine persons (so-called *De Deo Trino*). This is not a distinction between a natural philosophical reflection and a revealed theology, for every approach to God begins with revelation. (p. 157) Nor did Thomas intend to deduce the Trinity from divine Unity. The dual consideration of the divine essence and the distinction between persons followed the need, obvious from the fourth century onwards, to combine the affirmation of the shared substance of the Three

and the affirmation of the properties which demonstrate the distinction of the Three. To envisage the Trinity, we must thus combine what is *shared* and what is *proper*. Such a strategy may already be found in Basil of Caesarea's *Against Eunomius* (written in the 360s) and was passed down to Aquinas via John Damascene (writing in the eighth century) (*ST* I, q. 40, a. 3). Our human way of knowing, which proceeds in a discursive fashion by dividing and assembling concepts, thus requires a chain of concepts and images that can lead us from God in his shared essence to God in the distinction of the three divine persons. One of Thomas's most important Trinitarian insights, which gave new depth to Christian understanding of what it means to speak of a shared essence, was his conception of the divine person as a 'subsisting relation' (*relatio subsistens*). The *relatio* entails that each divine person is distinct from the two others, whereas the *subsistere* ('to subsist') is the very act of divine essence. To define the concept of 'divine person' as *relatio ut subsistens* ('relationship as it subsists') integrates fully essence and person together. In this way, everything which had already been affirmed about the divine essence was integrated with the understanding of the divine persons as irreducible (Emery 2007: 58–63).

Aquinas's basic contribution consists in the analytical sequence through which he gives an account of the life of the Trinity: the act of being at the origin of another or the fact of receiving one's origin from another (q. 27), the mutual relationship founded on such an origin and its role in the distinction between one and another (q. 28), the person or *hypostasis* constituted in this way, identical to the relationship to the extent that this most singular relationship is not accidental but subsistence (q. 29). Without repeating Thomas's analysis, let us revisit his principal arguments.

Origin.

We can feel our way to life and origin in God through similarity to the spiritual activity of our own created mind, the image of God. This is one of the paths chosen by St Augustine, at the start of Book 9 of his *On The Trinity*, as he explored the possibility of showing something of the Trinity by considering the relationships between the human mind, self-awareness, and self-love (*mens, notitia, amor*).

Revelation teaches us that God the Father eternally begot his Only Son, also described as the *Logos* in the Johannine prologue. The eternal Word of the covenant was made manifest in the flesh of Christ, letting his glory shine through, comparable to the glory an Only Son receives from his Father. As speculative theology took up the baton from revelation, these two names of Christ (*Logos*—Word and Only Son/Only-Begotten) gave rise to the possibility of combining two available analogies to approach the mystery of eternal begetting in God: on the one hand, human begetting, and on the other hand, the conception of a word which is both interior and effective, loving and creative.

The two analogies balance one another. The conception of an interior word enables us to envisage the begetting as a process in which the end of the begetting—the (p. 158) word—nevertheless remains in that which uttered it—the mind. The conception of human begetting fundamentally expresses the unity of nature between that distinct reality that pro-

ceeds and that from which it proceeds. However, there remains a difference of scale between the divine and these analogies—while the unity of nature between humanity is only a specific unity, according to which various individuals are all part of the same species, the unity of nature between the three divine persons is a numeric unity, according to which each person subsists by the single act of being of the divine essence. Their unity of being is therefore much more radical than the shared belonging to the same nature of three human individuals.

When we talk about God, begetting cannot be complete without the accompanying love, just as it should be with human parents. Even though the nativity of the Son is an eternal and necessary act, whose formal principle is the divine nature held by the Father and fully communicated to the Son, love cannot be foreign to this paternal act. This motif of a love which is eternally joined to divine generation describes the origin of the Spirit from the love of the Father for his Son. The divine Word must therefore be understood to be a perfect Word, that is, susbsistent, interior, efficient, and filled with love. Linked to the eternal begetting of the Son as the Word of the Father, the Spirit proceeds as the unique Love from the Father and the Word. Yet we must clearly distinguish between love as an operation and love as a personal term. The operation of love is not really distinct from the Father and the Son but from this eternal act of mutual love the Spirit proceeds, Love constituted as a person who is truly distinct from the Father and the Son.

Relationship.

Thomas’s account of relations in the Trinity owes much to Aristotle and Boethius, in addition to the tradition received from the Fathers—particularly the Cappadocians and Augustine. For all of these, the philosophical conception of relationship is located within Aristotle’s tenfold categorization of being, ten ways in which modes of being may be expressed. These are substance (substrate/essence), quantity, quality, relative, place, time, position, having, action, and passion. For Aquinas, it is a given of the tradition of the faith that the eternal relationships between the divine persons are real, not simply projected by our reason (*De pot.*, q. 8, a. 1). The explanation of this fact, however, remains the subject of theological research.

Relationships of reason are established simply by our reflection, while real relationships are not a priori dependent on our thought. Real relationships are factual: so-and-so is the son of so-and-so, so-and-so weighs twice what so-and-so weighs, etc. A natural origin gives rise to real relationships between the principal of action and what arises from it. Origin thus begins a relationship. We must distinguish between two aspects in the mode of being which constitutes a relationship. In the first place, existing within a subject and in virtue of one’s capacity to be (*inesse*); in the second place, formally constituting a relationship with another thing (*esse ad*). Relationship exists in a subject like any other accident of substance. For example, I am the son of Sarah, but when my mother dies, I shall probably continue to exist, because that depends a priori on my substance, which is the source of a being who has the gift of autonomy. But in addition to its accidental nature, relationship also has (p. 159) its characteristic specificity among the kinds of being—its

structural relation to another. The category of relationship is not located in its accidental condition but in its correlation to something other, such as between father and son, neighbours, double and half, etc.

Since, because of his simplicity and transcendence, there can be no accidents in God, the relationships between the persons occur mysteriously without being accidents. They are simply identified with the divine essence, whose unique act is to subsist as the Trinitarian God. Only the second dimension of relationship, the most proper, remains secure: the relationship to a correlative term, called the 'opposite' term as the Son responds to the Father, the Father to the Son, etc. The opposition of relationship differs from other kinds of opposition. In this case, the opposing things are not separated from each other, as is the case in affirmation and negation, not-having and having, or in the contradiction of two terms. As a consequence, each of the two opposing relationships may be considered to be perfect. Relative opposition is thus not an opposition in its current meaning of hostility, but a logical opposition between two correlative terms. The opposing things relating to one another are, furthermore, inseparable—we cannot think about one without the other. If this is a real relationship, they are also naturally inseparable in reality.

There are four real and distinct relationships in God, which are fatherhood, sonship, spiration (from Father and Son), and procession (of the Spirit). These relationships formally distinguish the persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit. This does not imply that the life of the Trinity is summarized in the reality of the mystery by these four relationships, for that would be reductionist. Without going too far down a descriptive pathway, let us recognize that we may describe a real wealth of relationships in the divine life: fatherhood and sonship, interpersonal exchanges, mutual love, mutual knowledge and recognition, consent, gratitude, etc. Finally, let us not forget that fatherhood and sonship in God ineffably perfect and transcend everything we know about the human relationship of fatherhood and sonship.

Finally, relationship is the only category in which a being must be described through identifying its relationship to another, and yet without fundamentally modifying its substance. In this way relationship can signify a real distinction in God without implying a real division of the divine substance (*De pot.*, q. 8, a. 2, ad 4). If we can hold in our minds the fundamental structure of relationship, while keeping separate from it the accidental mode in which we encounter relationship in the created order, we can imagine a duality of relatives, but without assuming that these relatives imply two distinct substrates for those relationships. In this way relationship may express God's plurality without in any way distorting the unity and simplicity of the divine substance. This enables us to maintain rationally that Trinitarian faith belongs to strict monotheism: the divine essence remains one, unique, and undivided.

The person.

Any understanding of the divine person depends on the theological notion of the Trinitarian relationship. The complex genealogy of the term *prosōpon* or *persona* has been widely

studied (see Meunier, 2006). We shall content ourselves with mentioning some presuppositions useful for Thomas's outcome.

(p. 160) Augustine made important use of the term *persona*. Anthropologically speaking, having initially suggested that the union of the soul and the body was accidental, he ultimately came to think about the substantial unity of the human person. *Persona* thus became synonymous with the word *homo*, used to signify the full human individual. Like Boethius, Augustine drew on Cicero's definition of the human being as 'a rational, mortal animal' (*Trin.* 15.7.11; Augustine 1963: 464). To describe the *persona* as it is found in God the Trinity, he makes use of its relative aspect: 'In this Trinity … those names, which are predicated relatively the one to the other, are properly spoken of as belonging to each person in particular …' (*Trin.* 8.1. *pref.*; Augustine 1963: 243). Yet continuing his anthropological perspective, Augustine suggests that *persona* is an absolute and non-relative term, which describes the individual (a *substantia*), to the extent that the Trinitarian usage is in fact an exception. Augustine clearly perceives the difficulty of giving a shared name to the Father, Son, and Spirit, precisely because they are distinct from one another (*Trin.* V, 9, 10; VII, 6, 11). This difficulty hides a serious logical aporia: since the term 'person' is a generic name, which can be attributed to God and man, it should be possible to use it about the Trinity with a specific difference, which remains unknown to us with regard to the Father, Son, and Spirit. Augustine thus asked about the three 'whats' (*quid tres*) we need to talk about the Father, Son, and Spirit? The relative distinction between the divine persons initiates a way through this aporia, without the relationship being fully integrated into the joint meaning of *persona*.

As heir to this knowledge, and a keen connoisseur of Greek culture, Boethius drew up a rigorous definition of *persona*, as part of a contribution to the Christological disputes that were then raging in the East. Boethius offers a general definition as follows: 'And so, if person belongs to substances alone, and those that are rational, and if every nature is a substance not in universals but in individuals, we have found the definition of the person: the individual substance of a rational nature' (*Against Eutyches and Nestorius* 3). Thus Boethius thought he had established a definition of person common to God, the angels, and humanity. He thus reached an initial approach to the *analogy* of the person, yet without sufficiently marking the *difference* between the divine and human (or angelic) modes.

Aquinas was able to go beyond Augustine's aporia, because he offered conceptual ways of thinking that the *divine* person is structurally relative, as pure relationship one to the other, constituted by the relative subject and identical to the shared substance. At the same time, Thomas, unlike Boethius, clearly distinguished between the person in general and the divine person. Only the divine person may be understood as a distinctive relationship that subsists, identical to the divine essence. Here relationship does not form part of the definition of the human person (see *ST* I, q. 29, a. 4, ad 4), as would later be the case with the rise of personalist philosophy in the twentieth century. The general concept of the divine person defined in this way is, however, only a category, which has to be filled by a mode of origin and a singular relationship, indicative of the property of a singular person, Father, Son, or Spirit. The study of the properties of each of the three persons (see q. 33:

the Father; q. 34–35: the Word-Son, also properly called (p. 161) 'Image'; q. 36–38: Spirit, Love, and Gift) is the response to the question about the divine person in general. As an indispensable addition to question 29 about the person, questions 33 to 38 unceasingly bring together created similarities drawn from the interpersonal relationships of fatherhood and sonship, of knowledge and self-love, and finally of mutual love.

Speculation 'on Ice' and Contemporary Renewal

A critique of the Trinitarian theology of late scholasticism emerged from the mid-seventeenth century in Catholic circles. It came from the rise to power of 'positive theology', and more attentive to diversity in patristic tradition. Positive studies increased at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century (see the works of Régnon, Lebreton, Prestige, etc.). This movement continues with an ongoing renewal of patristic study.

At the same time, in liberal Protestantism, Trinitarian theology has found itself progressively reduced to a purely economic doctrine of the Trinity, with modalist tendencies. The contemporary renewal of Trinitarian theology has developed in several stages, following a profound reassessment. Both dispute and excess began mainly in German-language theology, first Protestant and then Catholic. The Reformed theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968) did not intend to rework anything of scholasticism to restore a theology of the immanent Trinity! He relegated the 'psychological' analogy (*mens, notitia, amor*) to being a mere 'vestige of the Trinity' (*vestigiae Trinitatis*) which should be given up. He considered such theological reflection to be a theological distraction rather than a positive development on a par with the Trinitarian communication of God himself in his revelation. More expressive than the ternary rhythm of revelation that he also expounds (i.e. Revealer, Revelation, Revealed), for Karl Barth the authentic vestige of the Trinity is to be met in the humanity of Christ, through the very sequence of the Paschal event: Good Friday (veiling), Easter (unveiling), and Pentecost (sharing).

Subsequently Karl Rahner (1904–1984), in the Catholic arena, developed a Trinitarian theology of revelation, beginning with the Incarnation. He emphasized the close correspondence between God's self-communication in the history of salvation and the immanent Trinitarian self-communication of the divine life (see Rahner, 1974, 1970). Unfortunately, he makes use of an idealist notion of *Geist* in his Trinity treatise, as self-centred and self-mediated. But contemporary Trinitarian theology focuses above all on the Paschal mystery, particularly in the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar. For Balthasar, the perfect revelation of the Trinitarian mystery is accomplished by the Cross, through the expression of an extreme separation between the Son and the Father, overcome by the unity of love maintained in the Spirit. In this way the difference between (p. 162) the members of the Trinity and the divine communion are definitively manifest (see Balthasar, 1994). As these developments are well known and have been described elsewhere (see

Durand and Holzer, 2010), I will now draw attention to new possibilities for Catholic theology, particularly the overlap between Trinitarian theology and ethics.

The Human Person in Trinitarian Perspective

How should we consider the relationship between Christian ethics and Trinitarian theology? Of course, the unity of the Father, Christ, and the Spirit is revealed within a history of covenant, and concerns, to the highest degree, the salvation of all. Trinitarian faith thus describes Christian action; it grounds the ethical subject in God himself, and gives it not only a human, but also a divine end. However, it is appropriate to resist for a moment focusing only on the practical demands that stem from faith in the Trinity. Knowledge of God, as he is in himself and for us, is not measurable in his impact on ethics. God radically transcends our needs, our expectations, and our hopes. The Trinitarian mystery describes the point in our faith where this is most acute. The Trinitarian God cannot be domesticated or employed, but avoids any manipulation or appropriation. The Trinity cannot justify a priori particular human behaviours or particular models of community, be they social or political. Yet, a conversation between Trinitarian theology and Christian ethics is legitimate, for God demands our response to his revelation—but this response must involve a deep reverence, which leaves the Trinity to be God, out of reach of humanity unless by divine initiative and gratuity.

The contemporary approach to the human person as a subject in relationship with the other has distant roots in Aquinas's concept of the persons of the Trinity as a subsistent relationship. Yet it is important not to obscure the dissimilarity in the analogy and lapse into an incorrect univocity between the divine person and the human person. We have already clarified this: relationships for the human person are never subsistent. Relationships do not coincide purely and simply with the human person's being, even if they shape its singularity and autonomy. The integration of relationship in the person is the most obvious contribution of Trinitarian doctrine to contemporary anthropology.

Without limiting the understanding of the divine person simply to categories of substance and relationship, Trinitarian theology suggests a complementary further way forward for the human person: reflecting on the 'mission' of each divine person. This very ancient intuition is particularly clearly echoed in some modern phenomenologists, when they speak of call and response, vocation and mission: 'The identity of the person and mission of each of the divine Persons enables us to come close to the truth of the (p. 163) human person, which is but the gift of oneself as participation in the shared task of rendering the world in one's truth. A subject becomes a person only in his grasp, however vague, of his personalising mission in the world' (Housset 2007, 223–224).

The theological understanding of this path requires a brief, properly Trinitarian clarification. The persons of the Son and the Spirit eternally issue from and return to the Father. Here, eternal existence and mission in the world correspond to one another and are linked together, for the sending of a divine person is the continuation and manifestation of his divine origin. The paternal origin and eternal return to the Father, which constitute

the persons of the Son and the Spirit, are translated into their own mission, closely linked to a distinctive mode of their Trinitarian existence. Thus, from our points of view, the mission is part of the very character of the persons of the Son and the Spirit, to the extent that only the mission itself allows the person and his distinctive personal characteristics to shine through.

From an ethical and anthropological perspective, these Trinitarian intuitions are reflected in the description of the human person, who issues from another (i.e. from human parents through the transmission of life, from God in terms of being). If the human person remains fundamentally substance, a singular unity of soul and body, the person is then also fundamentally potential. That potential may be described in various ways: the subject is potentiality in relationship with God, with him or herself, with the other. As a result, she or he is called to act in truth, following the call of God, and then to take on a role and mission within the human community.

The path we have just traced rejects any modern reduction of the person to the subject, most often characterized by reflecting on the conscience, and postulating a freedom founded on our establishing a way of life which will result in perfect independence. Such a definition once had the benefit of shielding the empirical person from being dismembered by the many blows rained down on him from the positive or anthropological sciences—medicine, sociology, psychiatry, etc. But the subject, surviving in this way, remains above all concerned to become his own master. Making use of Trinitarian concepts offers different possibilities for thought. The calling into question of the person as independent conscience may offer a salutary signal to the philosopher.

Without neglecting the substantial dimension, let us return to the redefinition of the person as a subject in relationship who receives his call to become such a thing with and for the other. Entering into a living relationship always remains a vocation, a gift, and a task for the human person, with so many dimensions to note, promote, and maintain. Interpersonal relationships, understood as a vocation of the ethical subject, require the examination of the conditions which will effectively bring this about, especially in asymmetry and reciprocity.

Ethical reciprocity describes how subjects engage in love, dialogue, exchange, teaching, etc. Reciprocity has, however, been called into question and critiqued by Levinas and Derrida. Reciprocity seems impossible faced with an otherness which cannot be overcome. What is more, suspicion weighs on the self-interest which can interfere in the relationship with another, or in gift. The desire or expectation for this (p. 164) to be returned, for a gift in exchange, colours the giving, transforming it into domination. If gift is understood as exchange, the first to receive is submitted to serving a debt, and the two parties are locked into a contractual or mercantile logic. The response to these criticisms of the impossibility of reciprocity is, first of all, philosophical (Labbé 2009). In action, in love, or in the dialogue which links them, subjects can free themselves mutually and partially from their exteriority, without denying their otherness and collapsing into fusion or standing in self-sufficiency. With regard to shared experience, it is incorrect to radicalize human oth-

erness to an extreme, to the extent of thinking that this commits the subject to alienating relationships. Of course, most of our human relationships take on some asymmetry, whether in knowledge, understanding, responsibility, caring, generosity—but, for all this, reciprocity between ethical subjects is neither suspended nor impossible.

Without being necessary for philosophical debate, Trinitarian theology is able to shed more light on ethical reciprocity. The three divine persons are effectively united by a *perichōresis* which signifies the mutual immanence of the hypostases, the reciprocity of their relationships, and their loving interpersonal communion (Durand 2005). The divine persons remain in one another, without exteriority of substance. Their distinctive relationships (fatherhood, sonship, spiration, procession) are asymmetrical and cannot be substituted, for these are relationships of origin, but nonetheless they remain reciprocal: sonship responds to fatherhood, procession responds to spiration. In addition, the three divine persons are constituted as *hypostasis* in a way which correlates them to each other, including the Father with regard to the Son and the Spirit. Finally, the unity of the Trinity cannot only be understood as an indispensable consubstantiality, but also as a loving communion that takes on the distinction of the persons. In the Trinitarian mystery, unity between the Three is entirely pre-eminent, but the singularity of each is also incomparably more radical than it is among human beings, for the divine person is identified by its distinctive relationship.

Of course, human relationships have neither the simplicity nor the perfection of divine relationships. However, recognizing the failing character of the analogy between the created (or, better still, converted) subject and the Trinitarian God, we must acknowledge that our vocation to share in the Trinitarian communion demonstrates a powerful capacity for relationship, reciprocity, and communion. While the relationship stemming from our status as *imago Dei* does not legitimize excessive similarity between human and divine, the Trinitarian archetype removes any false opposition between otherness and relationship, between asymmetry and reciprocity, since both characterize the divine communion between Father, Son, and Spirit. In the mystery of the Trinitarian life, the radical gift of the Father to the Son encounters the Son’s consent to receive his origin from another, as well as his gratitude for the possibility offered to him to return his own, identical love in the person of their shared Spirit. Beyond our woundedness and weaknesses, we are images of the Trinity, well able to give and receive, take on our origin, and consent to it in reciprocity.

(p. 165) Finally, the explanation of Trinitarian faith responds to a dual question of identity. First, the relational identity of Jesus Christ, who cannot be dissociated from Father and Spirit; and secondly, the identity of his disciples on the path to God, in the way of Christ, professing the Trinity as the ultimate foundation of their life and the keystone of their hope.

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The Incarnation

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter begins by considering the manner in which the New Testament texts present Christ, showing that these texts describe him as fully human and yet also prefigure the later Christological tradition by according him divine status. The chapter then considers the development of Christology in the early centuries of the Church, focusing eventually on the key definitions of the first ecumenical councils. A discussion of Thomas Aquinas's appropriation and articulation of this conciliar tradition is followed by treatment of some key issues that have been in debate over recent decades. These modern issues include questions about how we should envisage Jesus as a human person and the question of Jesus' status as unique saviour within the context of religious pluralism.

Keywords: Jesus Christ, Chalcedon, Christology, New Testament, Aquinas, person, salvation

THE Creed of the Council of Nicaea (AD 325), the doctrinal statements of the Council of Ephesus (AD 431), and the Creed of the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) form the dogmatic basis for the Catholic Church's understanding of the doctrine of the Incarnation. With this conciliar tradition as the centrepiece, this essay is divided into four sections. The first examines the New Testament foundation of this conciliar dogmatic tradition. The second discusses how this tradition developed within the early Church culminating in the conciliar confessions. The third briefly studies Thomas Aquinas's development of this Christological tradition. The last explores contemporary Christological issues in the light of the Catholic doctrinal belief.

The New Testament Proclamation

The Catholic Church founds its faith in Jesus as the incarnate Son of God and her subsequent doctrinal Christological tradition on the New Testament proclamation (see the Second Vatican Council's *DV* 17–19 and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 124–126). The Gospels witness to Jesus' authentic humanity. He had a human ancestry, and while royal, it was by no means particularly edifying (Matthew 1:1–17; Luke 3:3:23–38). Though he

was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, he was nonetheless truly born of a human mother (Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 2:1–8; Galatians 4:4). He was registered in the Roman census and so was firmly anchored in history. He grew up within a human family in a specific town and matured in wisdom and grace (Luke 2:39–40, 51–52). He was tempted (Mark 1:12–13). He experienced different human emotions and weaknesses—hunger (Matthew 4:2), thirst (John 4:7), tiredness (John 4:6), anger (Mark 3:5), compassion (Mark 1:41), distress (John 11:33), sadness (Matthew 26:37–38), and above all, death (Matthew 27:50). The author of 1 John glories in the fact that people heard, saw, and touched Jesus, and in so doing actually touched the Word of life (1:1).

(p. 168) While Jesus is an authentic man, did he reveal and does the New Testament profess that he is the divine Son of the Father? The Gospels acknowledge that the crowds were amazed at his teaching and his mighty deeds, wondering who this might be (Mark 1:27). Even Jesus himself asked his disciples the question: 'Who do you say that I am?' (Mark 8:29). For the disciples to believe that Jesus is the Son of God demands that Jesus himself had to reveal this truth. In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus never simply calls himself God, nor does anyone else call him God. To have done so would not have been precisely true, for he is not 'God' in an undifferentiated sense, but 'God' in a very particular sense. Nonetheless, he revealed his own self-conscious divine identity through his words and actions. For example, Jesus forgave the sins of a paralytic, an action that only God can do, and healed him so as to demonstrate that he did indeed have such divine authority (Mark 2:1–12). He also demonstrated his divine authority when he extended the application of God's commandments (Matthew 5:21–48). Moreover, Jesus revealed that he is specifically the divine 'Son of God'. He did this by referring to God as his Father in a unique and exclusive manner (Luke 2:49; Matthew 16:17; Mark 12:6). As Son, Jesus possesses singular knowledge of his Father that implies a communion between the Father and the Son that is divine in nature (Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22). He can address his Father in the most intimate of terms—as Abba (Mark 14:36). Thus, the Synoptics, far from being ambivalent as to Jesus' divine status, actually demonstrate how Jesus, in a most creative manner, revealed his true divinity through his words and deeds. It is important to note that within the Gospel of John the 'I Am' sayings of Jesus play an essential role in his divine self-revelation. Jesus designated himself as: 'I am the bread of life' (6:35); 'I am the light of the world' (8:12); 'I am the door of the sheep' (10:7); 'I am the good shepherd' (10:11); 'I am the resurrection and the life' (11:25); 'I am the way, the truth, and the life' (14:6); and 'I am the vine' (15:1). All of these sayings contain the double emphasis of the Greek *egõ eimi*—'I, I am'. However, what is important is not only Jesus' stress on the 'I am', but also what he predicated of the 'I am'. Jesus, in these 'I am' sayings has appropriated to himself truths and images that in the Old Testament belonged primarily, if not exclusively, to God. In the Old Testament, God was the provider of heavenly bread (Exodus 16:4; John 6:32); he was the author of light (Genesis 1:3); he promised to be the shepherd of his people (Ezekiel 34; Psalm 23); he was revealed to be the living God who is the author of life and who will restore life (Genesis 2:7; Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37); he was seen as the way to life and truth (Psalms 15:11, 42:3; Proverbs 6:23); and he was the vintner who planted the vine of Israel (Isaiah 5:1–7; Ezekiel 17:22–24). The culmination of this

manner of speaking is found in Jesus' use of the absolute 'I Am'. Jesus told his Jewish listeners that they would die in their sins, 'unless you believe that I am he (*egõ eimi*)' (John 8:24). Moreover, he assured them that when he is lifted up on the cross, 'then you will know that I am he (*egõ eimi*)' (John 8:28). In the subsequent debate over his age with his same Jewish audience, Jesus asserted: 'Amen, Amen, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am (*egõ eimi*)' (John 8:58). At this point the Jews picked up stones to throw at him (John 8:59). The reason for such hostility is that Jesus deliberately and consciously appropriated to himself the most sacred name in the Jewish tradition, the very divine name 'Yahweh', and thus was blaspheming, the punishment for which was stoning.

(p. 169) Besides Jesus' own self-revelation as the divine Son of the Father, the New Testament offers further professions of his divinity. For example, in the light of the Old Testament teaching on God's Word and Wisdom (Genesis 1:3; Psalms 33:6; Proverbs 8:22–31, 9:1–6; Wisdom 7:25–30, Sirach 1:1–10), the Apostolic tradition and the New Testament authors discerned that Jesus was the eternal Word and Wisdom through whom the Father created, and so as co-creator with the Father, Jesus existed before all else, and thus is equally eternally God (see John 1:1–3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15–20; Hebrews 1:1–3). Moreover, the proclamation that 'Jesus is Lord' is one of the earliest Christian declarations concerning the divine status of Jesus. Within Hellenistic Judaism the term 'Lord' came to refer to God himself. So sacred and holy was the divine name 'Yahweh' that the Jewish people refused to utter it out of respect. They substituted the title 'Adonai' (Lord). The Septuagint translated 'Yahweh/Adonai' as 'Kyrios' (Lord). Thus, when the first Christians designated the resurrected Jesus as their 'Lord', they were attributing to him a divine title, one that previously had been reserved to Yahweh alone. This is seen especially within a liturgical and doxological setting where Jesus is worshipped as 'Lord' (Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 11:26 and 16:22; Philippians 2:9–11; Revelation 22:20). The most striking example is in the worship of the 'doubting Thomas'. Despite his lack of faith, Thomas is the only person in the entire New Testament to worship the risen Jesus by actually acknowledging him in faith as 'my Lord and my God' (John 20:28). There are other passages where Jesus is worshipped and so acknowledged to be God (Acts 7:54–60; Revelation 5:12–13; Matthew 28:19).

While not in abundance, there are also passages within the New Testament that explicitly designate Jesus as God (John 1:1; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Philippians 2:6; 2 Peter 1:1; Hebrews 1:8). The last New Testament verse to note is John 1:14, which explains that 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us'. More than any other passage, this has influenced subsequent Christological development. First, it is 'the Word' who became flesh, the very same Word who was eternally with the Father and who is equally God. Second, it is this very Word who became flesh, that is, *sarx*. This word specifically denotes weakness, frailty, vulnerability, and the precariousness of human bodily life. It is in this manner that the Word dwelt among us (literally, 'pitched his tent among us' [Exodus 25:8; Numbers 35:34]), as one truly and genuinely like ourselves. Moreover, it is from within the frailty and infirmity of this humanity that we 'behold his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father' (John 1:14).

The Conciliar Christological Development

Three Preliminary Points

First, from post-apostolic times, many interconnected factors have fostered Christological development. Some of these factors are internal to the Church and (p. 170) some are external. The primary internal factor is the dynamic interrelationship between the New Testament proclamation and the living reality of the Church throughout the centuries. St Augustine (AD 354–430), followed by St Anselm (AD 1033–1109), referred to this as 'faith seeking understanding'. Faith itself, compelled by the Holy Spirit, possesses an inner dynamism that necessitates deeper understanding of the person and work of Jesus. Christology also matures because of the Church's evangelistic and catechetical needs. The early Church, for example, had to address not only the questions of the unbelieving Jews, but also those from the various Gentile populations with their pagan religions and philosophies. Second, the catalyst for much Christological development is the emergence of various heresies. Faced with the challenge of heretical views of Christ, the early Church was obliged to defend, clarify, and proclaim clearly who Jesus is, and in so doing grew in its own understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation. Finally, the Church, beginning with the early Church Fathers, instinctively, through faith, realized that to conceive properly and to express precisely a true understanding of the Incarnation as proclaimed in the New Testament, three truths must be affirmed simultaneously: (1) it is truly God the Son who is man, which emphasizes the full divinity of the Son; (2) it is truly man that the Son of God is, which emphasizes the Son's full and complete humanity; and (3) the Son of God truly is man. This final truth emphasizes the ontological union between the person of the Son and his humanity; that is, Jesus must be one being or reality, and the one being or reality that Jesus is, is the Son of God existing as man. Christological heresy always denies one or more of these three Incarnational truths. Orthodox Christological development, as exemplified in the early councils, always entails properly conceiving these three truths and expressing them appropriately. Third, because the true divine Son truly exists as a true man, one can predicate divine and human attributes of the Son. For example, God is born, God suffers, or Jesus created the world. This came to be termed the communication of idioms (*communicatio idiomata*). It is an arresting way of expressing the full truth of the Incarnation. Only if the true Son of God actually exists as an authentic man, can the Son, in fact, be born, suffer, and die. Historically, in the midst of Christological controversy, it was the use and defence of the communication of idioms that has fostered the greatest Christological development—that of clearly conceiving and properly expressing the three Incarnational truths.

The Fathers and the Early Councils: The Three Incarnational Truths

Employing these three Incarnational truths, we will now discuss the Christological development within the early Church.

(p. 171) It is Truly the Son of God Who is Man

The issue of Jesus' full divinity, as the Son of the Father, did not reach crisis point until a priest of Alexandria, Arius (d. AD 336), declared that the Son/Word could not possibly be God as the Father is God, but was the first of all beings created, and the most like God. Prior to Arius's denial, the Church did profess, in the light of the New Testament proclamation, that Jesus was truly God. For example, Ignatius (*c.*107), bishop of Antioch, simply stated on fourteen occasions within his seven extent letters, that Jesus is 'God', and on eight of these actually refers to him as *ho theos* ('the God'). The question that soon arose was: how is it possible to uphold that God is one and the Son is God simultaneously. Did this not imply a logical contradiction? Either there must be two gods or the Son is not God. Various attempts were made to address this issue. The Roman theologian Sabellius (early third century), for example, advocated that the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit merely referred to different modes or expressions of the one God. The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit were not distinct subjects/persons, but names given to the different ways that one God expressed himself. Thus, God manifested himself under one modal expression, as Son, when he became man. While this obviously preserved the oneness of God, it completely made nonsense of the New Testament for it portrays the Father and the Son as distinct subjects in their own right. Tertullian (*c.*160–220) mockingly commented: Jesus 'the Son' would pray to 'the Father', but then God would immediately have to change his mode of expression to that of 'the Father' in order to receive and answer the prayer, and then once more revert to being 'the Son' in order to receive 'the Father's' response. While Pope Callistus seems, for a time, to have been sympathetic to Sabellius's endeavour, he ultimately excommunicated him. In contrast to Sabellius's thought and other forms of modalism, Origen (AD 185–254) emphasized the distinct identities of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He was the first to teach explicitly that, since the Father is eternally the Father, he eternally begot his Son. The Son, then, is eternally a distinct subject or person (in Greek *hypostasis*) who, by emanating out from the Father, shares in his one substance or nature. The difficulty is that while the integrity of the divine persons is ensured, their divine equality is not. Because the Father constitutes the whole of the Godhead, the Son (and the Holy Spirit), who emanates from him, is divine by derivation and so is less divine than the Father.

While the Church's faith demanded that God be one and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all be equally the one God, theologians were unable to conceive satisfactorily or articulate clearly how such could be the case. Arius recognized the weaknesses within all the previous attempts and concluded that there was no possible solution. According to Arius, for God to be one meant that the Son could not possibly be God. His conclusion that the Son must be the first of all creation is also strengthened by the fact that the Son became man. In Arius's view, for the Son to become man demanded that he change in so becoming and experience all the weaknesses associated with such an existence—thirst, hunger, suffering, and death—all of which were contrary to God's unchanging and all-powerful nature. Therefore, the Son must be a creature and not (p. 172) God. Because of the use of the communication of idioms—the Son suffers—Arius concluded that he must not be God. In response to Arius's denial that the Son was truly God, the bishops at the

Council of Nicaea (325) declared that the Son of God is 'begotten from the Father, only begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, one in being (in Greek *homoousion*) with the Father'. Because the Son is 'begotten' and not 'made' (as Arius held), he is what the Father is—God. What is made is always of a different nature from the maker. What is begotten is always the same nature as the begetter. Ants make anthills but beget other ants. God created the world but begot his Son. Moreover, Athanasius (*c*.296–373), bishop of Alexandria, realized the significance of the Nicene doctrine that the Son is one in being (*homoousion*) with the Father. Athanasius perceived that the Godhead did not reside in the Father alone, as many previously presumed, which He then shared, in a lesser manner, with the Son. Rather, Christian revelation demanded that one conceive the one God as the Father begetting the Son. This is why the Son is 'one in being with the Father' and so divine as the Father is divine. What the one being of God is, *is* the Father begetting the Son. The begetting of the Son by the Father constitutes the very nature that is the one God. In the light of the Nicene doctrine, contrary to Arius's claim, the scriptural proclamation that God is one and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all equally the one God can be affirmed, though not fully comprehended. Once it had been dogmatically established that the Son is truly God as the Father is God, further Christological concerns came to the fore, that of the full humanity of Jesus and the proper relationship between his divinity and humanity.

It is Truly Man that the Son of God is

It is taken as axiomatic today that Jesus was an authentic human being. However, one of the earliest heresies that confronted the Church was Docetism (coming from the Greek word *dokesis*, meaning 'to seem'). The Docetists argued that the Son of God only 'seemed' or 'appeared' to take on human flesh, but actually did not. Thus, all that pertained to Jesus' humanity—birth, eating, suffering, dying, etc.—was only apparent and not real. They reasoned that if the Son is truly God, he could not truly assume human flesh for to do so would jeopardize his divine nature. God could not actually suffer and die. Similar to Arius's later argument, though drawing the opposite conclusion, the Docetists deduced falsely, based on the communication of idioms, that if the Son is truly God, then he cannot suffer and therefore he cannot be human. Ignatius of Antioch argued, contrary to the Docetists, that if the Son of God only pretended to be a man, if his 'human' life were a mere charade and thus his birth, baptism, suffering, and death were simply pantomime, then our salvation is a mere pretence and counterfeit. For Ignatius, only if the Son of God actually assumed an authentic humanity, actually came to exist as a man, could he truly achieve our salvation. Apollinarius of Laodicea (*c*.310–*c*.390) was a friend of Athanasius and an ardent supporter of the divinity of Christ. Moreover, Apollinarius rightly realized that if humankind is to be saved, (p. 173) the Son of God could not merely adopt an already-existing man, similar to his enlightening the prophets and saints, rather he must be substantially united to flesh. However, it is here that Apollinarius made two mistakes. First, in order to assure this substantial union Apollinarius modelled the Incarnation after the union of soul and body. As the soul is united to flesh forming the one human being, so

the Son is united to flesh alone to form the one reality of Christ. Jesus did not have a human soul, the Son taking its place. If he did have a human soul, Apollinarius argued, one would have two complete whole beings, and 'two perfect things cannot be one' (Pseudo-Athanasius, *Against Apollinarius*, 1:2). Because Christ had no human soul, he was not like us, but rather, as Apollinarius stated, he was a 'heavenly man' (Fragment, 45). Second, Apollinarius argued that, since it is the human soul (with its flawed intellect and will) that is prone to evil and sin, it is necessary to discard this defective part lest it cause Christ to sin and so jeopardize our salvation. The Son became the sole governing principle (the *hegemonikon*) which energizes the flesh thus assuring that Christ is always obedient to the Father. Jesus had no human intellect, or will, and no human psychological principle. The divine Word alone performed all of these functions (Fragment, 107). Apollinarius was roundly condemned for his denial of an essential Incarnational truth—the authentic and full humanity of Christ. The Cappadocian Fathers, Basil the Great (330–79), Gregory of Nyssa (330–95), and Gregory of Nazianzus (330–90), were at the forefront of those opposing Apollinarius. They rightly perceived that his Christology was Docetic since Jesus lacked what was essential to being fully human—a human soul with a concomitant intellect and will. Moreover, the argument that triumphed over Apollinarius was soteriological in nature. Where Apollinarius felt obliged to deny the human soul of Christ since such a soul was defective, Gregory of Nazianzus argued that it was precisely for this reason that he was obliged to possess such a soul. Anyone who has placed his hope in a human being who lacks a human mind is himself truly mindless and does not deserve a complete salvation. For what was not assumed, was not healed. What is saved is that which has been united with God.

> If it was half of Adam that fell, then half might be assumed and saved. But if it was the whole of Adam that fell, it is united to the whole of him who was begotten and gains complete salvation. Then let them not envy us this complete salvation, nor equip the Saviour only with bones and sinews, with mere representation of a man
>
> (*Ep*. 101; Hardy 1954: 218–219).

It is the Son of God Who Truly Is Man

Percolating throughout the early Christological development concerning the full divinity of Jesus as well as his authentic humanity is the issue of how one conceives their relationship; that is, what does it mean to say that the Son of God is truly man? The communication of idioms intensifies this issue for it presumes that the Incarnational 'becoming' terminates in an Incarnation 'is'—the Son of God truly is man? At the very (p. 174) genesis of the development of Christology, Ignatius of Antioch clearly perceived this. He speaks of 'divine blood' or 'the passion of my God', and emphasizes, contrary to his Docetic antagonists, that God the Son was truly born, really was thirsty and hungry, and actually suffered and died. For Ignatius, one can use such striking language because the Son of God does actually exist as man. While God as God does not have blood nor is God born or suf-

fer as God, yet because he does actually exist as man, he truly does possess blood and can truly suffer and die. Ignatius writes to the Ephesians:

> Very Flesh, yet Spirit too; Uncreated, and yet born; God-and-Man in One agreed, Very-Life-in-Death indeed, Fruit of God and Mary's seed At once impassible and torn By pain and suffering here below: Jesus Christ, whom as our Lord we know.
>
> (*Eph*. 7.2: Staniforth and Louth 1987: 63)

Athanasius, for soteriological reasons, realized that the divine Son needed to assume an authentic humanity. 'Just as we should not be delivered from sin and the curse if the flesh taken up by the Word were not human flesh, so likewise man would not be deified were he who became incarnated not the true and real Word of the Father' (*Or*. 2:70; Robertson 1995: 386). Likewise, the union between the divinity and the humanity in Jesus must be substantial. Athanasius stated that the Word 'became man and did not come into man' (*Or.* 3:30). Thus, the Word was present in Christ in a manner that differed in kind from his presence in prophets or saints in the past. Adoptionism—'coming into man'—would not do. However, in professing that the Son became man, did this imply that the Son changed into man? For Athanasius, the Word 'has become flesh not by being changed into flesh, but because he has assumed on our behalf living flesh and became man' (*Letter to Epictetus*, 8; Robertson 1995: 573). 'Become' means neither 'come into man' nor 'changed into man;' rather, it means 'come to exist as man'. This meaning is witnessed in Athanasius's use of the communication of idioms (the attribution of divine or human properties to the other nature because of the closeness of the union between them):

> When he [the Word] is said to hunger and thirst and to toil, and not to know, and to sleep, and to weep … and in a word undergo all that belongs to the flesh … let no one stumble at what belongs to man, but rather let a man know that in nature the Word himself is impassible, and yet because of the flesh which he put on, these things are ascribed to him, since they are proper to the flesh, and the body itself is proper to the Saviour.
>
> (*Or*. 3:34; Robertson 1995: 412)

Because the Son of God actually exists as man all that pertains to be human is rightly predicated of him.

A fresh controversy began in 428, however, when the new patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius (d. after 451), was asked if it was appropriate to call Mary *Theotokos*—Mother of God. Nestorius responded that such a title was of doubtful validity, not because he (p. 175) held Mary in low esteem, but because it betrayed an erroneous understanding of the Incarnation. To call Mary the Mother of God implied that the Son of God changed in becoming man, and more specifically that he underwent human experiences that were incompatible with his immutable and impassible divinity. Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria (375–444), vehemently protested. For him the traditional Marian title was the keystone to a proper understanding of the Incarnation. Cyril saw the title *Theotokos* as accentuating

the truth that the Son of God actually did become man and so could not only be truly born of Mary, but could also truly hunger, thirst, suffer, and die. Thus, the whole controversy was over the validity of the ancient use of the communication of idioms and the proper understanding of the Incarnation that sanctioned its use. In defence of its use Cyril wrote:

> We do not mean that the nature of the Word was changed and made flesh or, on the other hand, that he was transformed into a complete man consisting of soul and body, but instead we affirm this: that the Word personally (*kath hypostasin*—according to the person) united to himself flesh, endowed with life and reason, in a manner mysterious and inconceivable, and became man.
>
> (*Second Letter to Nestorius*, 3: Wickham 1983: 5–7)

In 431 an ecumenical council was held at Ephesus that affirmed Cyril's second letter to Nestorius as an authentic expression of the faith. With the death of Cyril in 444 the more extreme Alexandrian theologians Dioscorus and Eutyches ascended to power. Being an ardent anti-Nestorian, Eutyches (378–454) proposed that before the Incarnation there were two natures, but after the union there was only one nature, and thus his Christology became known as Monophysitism. The divinity swallowed up the humanity. Because Eutyches's Christology was perceived as a new form of Docetism and Apollinarianism, Pope Leo the Great condemned Eutyches (449) in his Tome to Flavian and called a council at Chalcedon (451) which upheld both Pope Leo and Cyril and also issued a new creed. The Fathers emphasized that it is 'one and the same' Son/Word who is perfect in Godhead and the same perfect in manhood. Because Jesus is the one and the same Son existing as God and man, the incarnational act of 'becoming' establishes a union whereby the natures are not confused or changed, nor are they divided or separated. The reason the natures are not confused or changed is because the incarnational union—the 'becoming'—is not the compositional union of natures that would give rise to a new third kind of being. Yet, the natures are not divided or separated because they are united to the one person (*hypostasis*) or subject of the Son/Word—thus the traditional phrase, hypostatic union. The incarnational 'becoming' is Personal/Existential act/union whereby one and the same person of the Son/Word comes to exist in a new mode as man because the humanity is ontologically united to the very person of the Son/Word. Because it is one and the same Son who exists as God and as man, then both divine and human attributes can be predicated on one and the same Son.

(p. 176) Thomas Aquinas: The Son Subsists as Man

Following the lead of Cyril of Alexandria and the Council of Chalcedon, Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) insisted that the Son of God actually 'subsisted' as man (*ST* III, q.2, a.6, ad 2). Moreover, Aquinas stressed that the human nature was united to the Son as the Son personally existed as God, what he termed the Son's *esse personale*:

> Since the human nature is united to the Son of God, hypostatically or personally … and not accidentally, it follows that, by the human nature, there accrued to him no new personal being (*esse personale*) but only a new relation of pre-existing personal being (*esse personale*) to the human nature, in such a way that the person is said to subsist not merely in the divine nature but also in the human nature'.
>
> (*ST* III, q.17, a.2)

Two points must be noted. First, in becoming man, there was no change, no 'newness', in the way the Son personally existed as God, that is, in his personal divine being (*esse personale*). Rather within the incarnational act, in the 'becoming', the human nature was newly related to the person of the Son of God as the person of the Son of God actually exists as God, in his *esse personale*. While there was no change in the manner in which the Son of God existed as God there was a newness in that he now newly existed as man. Second, it is precisely because the human nature was united to the very person of the Son as the Son actually existed as God (*esse personale*) that the Son, in the fullness of his personal divinity, actually newly came to exist or subsist as a man. In speaking of the human nature being related to and being substantially united to the very person of the Son as the Son actually existed as God, Aquinas added new depth and clarity to Chalcedon's understanding of the Incarnation.

Contemporary Christological Issues

In the light of the Catholic Church's doctrinal Christological tradition a number of contemporary issues concerning the Incarnation have arisen. These will be discussed within the context of the Catholic faith.

Christology from Above and from Below

Contemporary authors frequently discuss what is perceived as two approaches to Christology (Rahner 1979). One is referred to as Christology 'from above', in that it (p. 177) emphasizes that the divine Son of God 'came down from heaven' and became man. While this approach to the Incarnation ensures the full divinity of Jesus, it is sometimes criticized for undervaluing the humanity of Jesus and so his historical life and Jewish cultural milieu. The other Christological approach—Christology 'from below'—emphasizes the humanity of Jesus and so his historical life and cultural conditioning. However, some authors confuse two points when discussing this Christological approach 'from below', one of which is true and so is in conformity with the Council of Chalcedon, and the other is false and so is not in conformity. Jesus could only reveal his divine identity as Son through his humanity, through what he said and did as a man. Epistemologically, Christology must, by necessity, be 'from below'. However, some contemporary theologians confuse our way of coming to know that Jesus is the Son of God with the way Jesus himself actually did become the Son of God. We come to know that Jesus is divine 'from below', from and through his humanity, but Jesus himself did not become divine 'from below', as if through

his prayer and obedience he was subsumed into the divine. Such a Christology would merely be a form of adoptionism and not the Son of God actually coming to exist as man.

The Council of Chalcedon and so Catholic belief, demands that Christology must always be ontologically 'from above', that the Incarnation is always the Son of God ontologically assuming a human nature and so coming to exist as man. Moreover, since the council professes that it is truly man that the Son of God is, epistemologically Christology must always be 'from below', that is, we can only come to know Jesus to be the eternal Son of God incarnate through his historical and earthly humanity. By correctly recognizing the ontological nature of the Incarnation on the one level and the epistemological nature of our coming to know Jesus as the Son of God incarnate on the other, the full significance of both Jesus' divinity and his humanity is properly balanced in accordance with the Council of Chalcedon and the Catholic tradition.

Did Jesus Know He Was God?

The early Church confirmed, in keeping with the truth that he is genuinely human, that Jesus possessed a human will and intellect (the Second and Third Councils of Constantinople, 553 and 680–81). However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the rise of historical consciousness and psychology, a new question arose: was Jesus conscious of his divinity and did he therefore know that he was God?

One must frame the question properly. The question is not 'did Jesus know that he was God?' as if Jesus the man, was a different person or subject (a different 'who') from that of the Son. The proper question is, in keeping with the Council of Chalcedon: was the Son of God conscious of himself and so knew that he was God in a human manner, that is, through his human consciousness and mind? The answer to this question is 'yes'. If the Son of God incarnate was not humanly conscious and so did not humanly know that he was the Son of God, he could not have revealed to us that he was the Son of God for he would have been ignorant of his own identity.

(p. 178) How, then, did the Son become humanly conscious and so humanly come to know that he was indeed God's Son? Traditionally, many Catholic theologians, including the great medieval scholars Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure taught that Jesus from his conception possessed the beatific vision and so from his conception knew he was the Son of God. However, this would not seem to be in keeping with the Son of God living an authentic human life, one like our own. Children normally come to perceive themselves as distinct persons at around the age of four. They begin to use the word 'I' in a meaningful manner. It would be around this age, in conjunction with Mary and Joseph teaching him to pray, that Jesus began to perceive in a human manner, through the Holy Spirit dwelling within him, his divine Sonship. Later, as he prayed the psalms and read and studied the scriptures—as he grew in wisdom, age, and grace—his self-understanding as the Son of God would have become more clearly perceived and defined, so that by the age of twelve he would have clearly known as man that he, as the Son, must be about his Father's business. While the *Catechism* does speak of 'the intimate and immediate knowledge that the

Son of God made man has of his Father' (*CCC* 473), it is noteworthy that it does not employ the term 'beatific'. Thus, one could argue that the earthly Jesus, as the incarnate Son of God, possessed, through the Holy Spirit, a human filial vision of the Father (Weinandy 2004 and 2006). This vision of the Father was such that Jesus became conscious of his own divine Sonship and so came to know his own self-identity as the Father's eternal Son. This would be in accord with the Council of Chalcedon. The one who is conscious of himself and so knows himself is the divine Son and the manner in which he is conscious of himself and so knows himself to be the divine Son is as man.

Is Jesus a Human Person?

Traditionally, in the light of the Council of Chalcedon, the one person of the divine Son is said to exist as a human being. However, some contemporary theologians argue that if Jesus is a divine person and not a human person, then he is missing something essential to being authentically human. They argue that Jesus must be a human person, but in so doing they, unavoidably, deny that Jesus is the divine Son of God (Macquarrie 1998). This issue is entirely misconceived.

Firstly, while it is absolutely crucial that Jesus' full humanity be maintained, this must be done precisely to ensure that this is what the Son of God is—an authentic man. To uphold the full humanity at the expense of the divinity is to jettison the most important reason for upholding his humanity, that is, to ensure that the Son of God actually is a man.

Secondly, the term 'person' is not some sort of 'thing' that must be added to a human being in order for that being to be complete. The term 'person' denotes that a particular being is a 'who' rather than a 'what' and possesses a singular identity. In all cases but one, human beings possess a specific human identity, a specific human 'who'. When asked: 'who are you?', a person answers by giving his or her name, which identifies that person as a particular and unique human being. The difference between Jesus and every (p. 179) other human being is that, while he possesses everything that pertains to being authentically human—a body, intellect, will, self-consciousness, etc.—he does not possess a human identity, but rather he possesses a divine identity as the Son of God. The identity of this particular and unique human being, Jesus, is that of the Son of God. Thus, to say that Jesus is a divine person or subject (a divine 'who') and not a human person or subject (a human 'who') is not to deprive him of a full humanity, but rather articulates the very mystery of the Incarnation, that is, that the person of the Son of God has come to exist as man, and therefore the identity of this man (who he is) is the Son of God. When Jesus asked: 'who do you say that I am?', he wanted the apostles to acknowledge his divine identity, his divine personhood, who he really is. Peter got it right when he answered: 'You are the Christ; the Son of the living God'.

The Human 'I' of Jesus

Traditionally, theologians who have followed the doctrine of Chalcedon have argued that there is only one 'I' in Christ, and that is the divine 'I' of the Son of God. The obvious rea-

son for this is to confirm, in accordance with Chalcedon, the singular divine identity or personhood of Jesus as the Son of the Father. Bernard Lonergan, SJ, held that inasmuch as the same subject is aware of himself through both the divine consciousness and the human consciousness, 'there is, absolutely speaking, only one "I" in Christ just as there is only one person' (Lonergan 2002: 209). In a qualified manner, however, Lonergan argues that one can also speak of a human 'I'. Since Christ possesses two natures and so two consciousnesses, divine and human, he possesses, as a human psychological subject, an 'I' as human, 'which experiences itself with the limitations of the assumed nature' (Lonergan 2001: 201). Jean Galot, SJ, has emphasized that while there is one divine 'I' of the Son, that divine 'I' is manifested to others in a human, self-conscious manner. Thus, when Jesus said 'I', that was a divine 'I' speaking and acting in a human manner (Galot 1981: 319–343). It could also be argued that, in keeping with the Council of Chalcedon, it is more correct, within his incarnate state, simply to speak of the human 'I' of the divine Son (Weinandy 1996).

Within the Incarnation, the person/subject—the 'who'—is the Son of God. Nonetheless, the Son of God humanly experiences and humanly acts within the parameters of a human self-conscious 'I'. There is a human 'I' of a divine person/subject—a divine 'who'—the Son of God. For example, when Jesus asked: 'who do you say that I am?', he was asking his apostles to identify 'who' he is. Peter's correct answer to this question, as stated earlier, is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus' divine identity was here confirmed. However, while Jesus was eliciting from his apostles the affirmation of his divine identity as the Son of God, his divine 'who', the manner in which he asked the question was as a man, and so within the parameters of his own human self-consciousness. Thus, the 'I' in 'Who do you say that I am?' is a human 'I'. The Son of God as man, within the confines of a human 'I', is requesting that the divine identity of his human 'I' be affirmed —that the one who is humanly saying 'I' be identified as the Son of God.

(p. 180) This understanding of the Incarnation, that the divine Son of God possesses a human 'I', upholds and even intensifies Chalcedonian Christology. It accentuates that who it is who is man, the person or subject is none other than the divine Son of God, and it simultaneously heightens the fact that he actually became fully human even to the extent of speaking and acting within the parameters of a human self-conscious 'I'.

Religious Pluralism

Recently there has been a great deal of theological discussion concerning global religious pluralism, specifically Christianity's claim that Jesus is the singular and universal saviour. Some theologians argue that Jesus is merely one of any number of religious founders and that these other religions are of 'salvific' value in their own right apart from him. Such a position is contrary both to the proclamation of the New Testament and to the Christological tradition as canonized by the Council of Chalcedon.

No other founder of a religion, for example, Buddha or Muhammad, claimed to be God, and their adherents do not make such claims about them. However, Christian doctrine af-

firms and Christians believe that Jesus revealed himself to be the eternal Son of God and the Councils of Nicaea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon solemnly and definitively pronounced that Jesus was the Son of God, one in being (*homoousion*) with the Father. It is the fact that Jesus is not simply a prophet or a holy man but the Son of God incarnate that gives him a status that is singular in nature from all other founders of world religions. Jesus is not simply 'better' than the others founders of religions by way of degree—revealing more truth or living a holier life—but rather he differs in kind from other founders of religion for he is the definitive, unique instance of the Son of God existing as man.

Moreover, as the Son of God incarnate, Jesus accomplished what no other founder of a religion is able to do. First, he is able, as the Word of the Father, to reveal the fullness of divine truth. Second, through his sacrificial death, Jesus reconciled us to the Father and through his resurrection he conquered death and obtained for us eternal life. Third, as the glorious Lord and Saviour, Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on the Church at Pentecost. Fourth, only by being united to his risen humanity through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are human beings transformed into the children of the Father and so come to share in the very divine life of the Trinity. Fifth, while not all human beings are united through faith and the indwelling Spirit, yet, as the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council stated: 'By his incarnation, he, the Son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each man' (*GS* 22). Thus, whoever obtains salvation and eternal life does so because of Jesus through his incarnation, death, and resurrection. Jesus is, therefore, the universal and definitive saviour of the whole of humankind and (p. 181) his salvific work is predicated on the Chalcedonian faith that he is uniquely the Son of God incarnate (see *Dominus Jesus*).

Conclusion

The Second Vatican Council taught that in the Incarnation, the Son of God revealed what it truly means to be human. 'In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear' (*GS* 22). While human beings were first created in the image and likeness of the Word in order to know and love God and one another, yet sin disfigured that image. It is only because the Son assumed his own disfigured image that humankind was once more recreated in his image so as to be conformed, by the indwelling Spirit, into children of the Father. In so doing, human beings not only became truly and authentically human, but they come to share in the very divine life of God—the life and love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As Irenaeus (*c.*130–202) declared: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, of his boundless love, became what we are that he might make us what he is' (*Against Heresies*, 5, Pref.: Roberts and Donaldson 1995: 526).

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The Incarnation

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The Holy Spirit

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores the basic structure of Christian teaching about the Holy Spirit—pneumatology. The chapter considers, first, the biblical presentation of the Spirit and then explores the decisive contribution of theological debates in the fourth century ad. The contributions of the Cappadocian fathers and St Augustine of Hippo are considered. The chapter then focuses on the Filioque clause in the Latin version of the Nicene Creed, and the contribution of St Thomas Aquinas. It then goes on to explores the possibilities for ecumenical convergence on pneumatology, with a final discussion emphasizing the Spirit's role as the soul of the Church.

Keywords: Spirit, pneumatology, Augustine, Cappadocians, Thomas Aquinas, Church, Trinity, ecumenism, Filioque

IN considering the mystery of God the Holy Spirit theologically, we will begin with a brief examination of the biblical revelation of the person and mission of the Spirit in the divine economy. This leads us to a reflection on the Holy Spirit as the eternal, uncreated love of the Father and the Son, who is the ground of our creation and sanctification. From this, an analysis of the controversy surrounding the Spirit's procession from the Son necessarily stands in order, followed by a consideration of ecumenical prospects for convergence between Eastern and Western Christians on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We conclude with reflections on the Holy Spirit as the uncreated soul of the Church.

From the Spirit of the Lord to the Spirit of Christ

Christian theology takes its point of departure from the divine revelation given in and through salvation history. Within this history faith perceives a divine economy in which God freely manifests his hidden identity to us and simultaneously communicates to the human race a participation in his divine life. Just as the incarnation of the Son of God is foreshadowed in the Old Testament but only comes to full light in the New, so likewise,

the Holy Spirit is unveiled progressively in and through the economy as a person distinct from the Father and the Son.

In the faith of ancient Israel, God's identity and action are personified by recourse to the notion of the 'Spirit of the Lord' and the 'Spirit of God'. The Spirit of God is present at the time of the original creation, undertaking the work of ordering the world (Gen. 1:2). Likewise the Spirit of the Lord who revealed his Name to Moses (Exod. 3:14–15) also inspires Moses and the elders of Israel as the oracles and guardians of divine law (Num. 11:25–29) More generally, throughout the Old Testament he is the principle agent who dispenses divine prophecy, inspires judges, and anoints kings (Judg. 3:10; 1 Sam. 10:6; (p. 184) 1 Sam. 16:13; Ezek. 11:5). He descends in a particular way upon the Messianic figure of Isaiah 11:2 ('the Spirit of the Lord is upon me …'), and inspires him to bring consolation to the people of Israel (Isa. 40:1→Phil. 2:1). In the eschatological prophecies of Ezekiel and Joel, it is said that the end times will be those in which the Spirit of God writes not on tablets of stone but directly upon all the human hearts of the elect (Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; Joel 2:28–32→Acts 2:14–33) These various prophecies (messianic anointing, eschatological indwelling) will be fulfilled in Christ and the life of the apostolic Church.

While the Holy Spirit is known in the Old Testament only through personifications of divine activity, he is revealed in the New Testament as a distinct person whose work and activity accompany that of Jesus Christ. The missions of the Son and the Spirit are seen to be intimately interrelated. In the Synoptic Gospels the Holy Spirit is at the origins of Christ's virginal conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35). He descends upon the adult Christ in his baptism and drives him out into the desert to fast and pray (Matt. 3:16–4:1; Luke 3:22; 4:1). The Spirit accompanies Jesus in his public life by signs and wonders (Luke 3:16; 4:14), and enables him to fulfil the prophecies of Isaiah that confirm him as the Messiah (Luke 4:18 and Acts 10:38→Isa. 11:2). In dying Christ crucified gives up his Spirit to the Father (Luke 23:46). As the risen Lord, he announces to the disciples that when he has ascended to the Father the Holy Spirit will be sent upon the apostolic Church to inspire and guide them (Acts 1:8; 2:33).

The Gospel according to St John contains complementary ideas: on the night before he suffers, Jesus promises the disciples that the Father will send the Holy Spirit upon them in his name (John 14:25–26) and that he too will send the Spirit upon them 'from the Father', calling him the 'Spirit of truth who proceeds (*ekporeuetai*) from the Father' (John 15:26, see also 16:7). The night of the resurrection, Christ fulfils this promise by 'breathing' the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, so that they might forgive sins (John 20:22–23). Analogously, St Paul speaks about the Holy Spirit as the agent of our sanctification and filial adoption (Rom. 8:14–16). 'God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying out, *abba*, Father' (Gal. 4:6). Consequently, the Holy Spirit is also the 'Spirit of Christ' (Rom. 8:9) and the 'Spirit of Jesus' (Phil. 1:19).

If we consider the development from the monotheism of the Old Testament to that of the New, we can identify a movement from discourse about the 'Spirit of the Lord' to that of the 'Spirit of Christ'. The Christological monotheism of the New Testament that affirms

the divinity of Christ (his unity with the Father) also portrays the Holy Spirit as being sent from Christ. In this way it underscores not only the divinity of Christ (Hurtado 2003) but also the inseparability of the missions of the Spirit and the Son who work in union, both being sent into the world by the Father.

A Spirit who is Love

Christian theological reflection concerning the deity of the Holy Spirit came into its maturity in the fourth century AD. In the face of Arian Christologies of the early fourth (p. 185) century (that denied the divinity of Christ), St Athanasius of Alexandria posited a central theological argument for the divinity of Christ that was to influence later thinking concerning the Holy Spirit. In his *Orations Against the Arians* (1.38–40, 2.20–21, 3.12. A good selection of texts may be found in Anatolios 1998), who argued in effect that human salvation consists of union with God (divinization or theosis) and that this grace is attained by virtue of the Incarnation. Because God became human, human beings can be united to God. If Christ is not God then the universe is not saved by one who is himself a union of God and man, and is inevitably left only to its own finite, non-divine resources and initiatives. Given the divine transcendence of the Father, self-divinization is not possible for creatures. Christ, to be the saviour who unites us to God, then, must truly be both God and man. Athanasius applies very similar arguments to show the divine status of the Spirit in his *Letters to Serapion* (DelCogliano et al. 2011). Soon afterwards, the Cappadocian Fathers built on Athanasius's reasoning. Against neo-Arians who claimed the Spirit was a creature of the Father, they noted that the Spirit is the source of divinization and that his work is integral to the salvific agency of the Son.

> … The Godhead of the Holy Spirit can be proved thoroughly scriptural … Christ is born, the Spirit is his forerunner; Christ is baptized, the Spirit bears him witness; Christ is tempted, the Spirit leads him up; Christ performs miracles, the Spirit accompanies him; Christ ascends, the Spirit fills his place. Is there any significant function belonging to God, which the Spirit does not perform? Is there any title belonging to God, which cannot apply to him, except 'ingenerate' and 'begotten'? … The Spirit it is who created and creates anew through baptism and resurrection. The Sprit it is who knows all things, who teaches all things … He makes us his temple, he deifies, he makes us complete … All that God actively performs, he performs
>
> (Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 31.29; Williams and Wickham 2002: 139–140).

Accordingly, in the reformulation of the Nicene Creed in the ecumenical council of Constantinople (381 AD) the Holy Spirit was confessed as the 'Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father is worshipped and glorified'. The Holy Spirit is the creator himself, one with the Father and the Son, and with them he is the principle agent of our salvation.

A second decisive contribution of the Cappadocians came when they articulated the distinction of the divine persons by using the notions of generation and procession. Because the Father and the Son are one in being, they are identically God in all things (divine wisdom, love, power, and so forth). Consequently, they can be distinguished only because the Son is eternally begotten of the Father and eternally receives the divine nature or essence from the Father. By considering the distinctness of Son and Spirit *only* from the perspective of their relations to the unoriginate Father we avoid dividing the divine attributes. The Holy Spirit, then, is distinguished from the Father and the Son because he proceeds eternally from the Father, and because unlike the Son, he is not begotten as the Father's Word (see Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 29.2; 31.9). In this way the Cappadocians also rightly emphasized the paternal monarchy of the Father as the font (p. 186) or origin of Trinitarian life in God, from whom the Son and the Holy Spirit originate in their distinctness.

Third, this insight was coupled with another of equal importance regarding the monotheistic character of Trinitarian faith. St Gregory of Nyssa in his *To Ablabius. On Not Three Gods* emphasizes that there is a two-fold division of terms or names that can be ascribed to God: some proper to a unique person (Father, Word, Holy Spirit) and others equally and identically attributable to each person (divine life, simplicity, goodness, and so forth). Each of the persons has to be considered in a two-fold way: (1) as giving or receiving his divine life to or from another, and (2) as possessing the fullness of the divine nature. The distinction of the person of the Holy Spirit is upheld by recourse, then, to his relation of origin from the Father. His divinity and Lordship, meanwhile, are underscored by the attribution to him of the fullness of the divine nature, a nature he receives from the Father, but which he also possesses equally with the Father and the Son.

A generation after the Cappadocians, St Augustine of Hippo articulated the fundamental principles of Nicene theology in distinctive ways, contributing significant insights of his own. In particular, he noted that the principle scriptural analogy for the Son is that of the Word, a notion that pertains to intellect. The uncreated Word is also Wisdom begotten from the unbegotten Father, both the Wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24) and sharing in the unique divine Wisdom. If God is spirit, however, then there must also be an analogical resemblance between the Holy Spirit and something in the spiritual souls of human beings —one other than that pertaining to the intellectual generation of the Word. And so, Augustine introduces the complementary notion of love or will, a term that can be attributed analogically to God as well. The Holy Spirit is the uncreated charity of the Father and the Son, a person who is substantial love (see *On the Trinity* 9.3.3). Just as the Son is wisdom begotten from the Father in his wisdom, so the Holy Spirit is spirated love, who proceeds from the Father who is love.

Augustine insists on the paternal monarchy of the Father as the unique primary origin of the Word and the Spirit (*On the Trinity* 15.3.5). However, he also sees an order emergent in the mystery of the processions of the Word and the Spirit. Just as in the human being, spiritual love can only proceed forth in the will as a result of knowledge (because we can only love what we first know), so in the life of God, the Spirit who is love must proceed

forth from divine knowledge. He is therefore the Spirit of both the Father and the Word: a love who comes forth from wisdom. The human being as a knowing person capable of loving is a created image of God as the uncreated Father who creates all things in his Word and loves them in his Spirit of charity (*On the Trinity* 15.6.9–10). In considering the procession of the Holy Spirit more closely, then, Augustine builds on an idea that is found in other Latin authors, such as St Hilary (*On the Trinity*: 2.29; 8.20; 12.56) and in St Ambrose (*On the Holy Spirit*: 1.11): the Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. The Father in generating the Word gives to the Word all that he possesses, including the power to spirate, or breathe out, the Spirit, from himself as Son, but also with the Father. In fact, the Father and the Son spirate the Spirit *as one principle* or source of the Spirit (Augustine *On the Trinity*: 5.14.15) The Spirit, then, is the shared love of the Father and the Son, their mutual communion-in-love who is a person.

(p. 187)

> As then holy scripture proclaims that charity is God, and as it is from God and causes us to abide in God and him in us, and as we know this because he has given us of his Spirit, this Spirit of his is God charity. Again, if there is nothing greater than charity among God's gifts, and if there is no greater gift of God's than the Holy Spirit, what must we conclude but that he is his charity which is called both God and from God? And if the charity by which the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father inexpressibly shows forth the communion of them both, what more suitable than he who is the common Spirit of them both should be distinctively called charity?
>
> (*On the Trinity* 15.19.37; Augustine 1991: 424).

One can object that there is a problem with Augustine's ambitious use of this psychological analogy to speak of the persons of the Trinity, because terms proper to the divine nature (i.e. wisdom and love) are being attributed to singular persons in a distinct way. What Augustine has discerned, however, is that love, for instance, can be attributed to the Holy Spirit as a term proper to the divine nature (the divine love common to the Father, Son, and Spirit) *or as a relational term* used to denote the reception of the divine nature from another. His presentation of the Spirit as the personal love of the Father *and the Son* shows us why there can only be a difference between the Son and the Spirit if the difference is conceived uniquely in terms of the relations of origin. The Son comes forth from the Father alone, the Spirit from the Father and the Son, and as the love who is a fruit of their relatedness. However, these differences do not cancel out the mystery of divine unity and identity. The wisdom and love that are common to all three persons are in the Father who is unbegotten, in the Son as begotten Word, and in the Spirit as love spirated forth from the Father and the Son. By his theology of the procession of the Holy Spirit, Augustine maintains the Cappadocian understanding of the distinctions of persons by recourse to a theory of relations of origin and in fact deepens their insight through his understanding of the Spirit proceeding from the Son. Yet this also leads to a deeper sense of the monotheistic character of the Trinitarian faith. Because the persons are *only*

distinguishable by means of relational terms, they are therefore otherwise utterly identical in essence, wisdom, love, power, and so forth. This profound understanding of the unity of the persons was bequeathed to the subsequent theological heritage of Western Christianity. As we will see, Augustine's ideas will be further developed by Thomas Aquinas in his theological reflections on the Holy Spirit.

The Filioque and St. Thomas Aquinas

The Western Christian tradition continued to develop the ideas of Augustine and other patristic authors who affirmed a procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son as one principle. Progressively, this view became normative in Western theological *and* doctrinal thinking, and from the sixth century onward began to appear in creedal formulations in the Latin-speaking Church. When the 'Filioque' clause was originally (p. 188) added to the Nicene–Constantinople Creed ('He proceeds from the Father *and the Son*'), it was intended to underscore the divinity of the Son in his unity with the Father in all things, over and against various heresies (such as Arianism and Adoptionism). However, it also represented a doctrinal development in the Western Church's thinking regarding the mystery of God in himself. By the eighth century, this development was, at times, fiercely contested by some ecclesiastical authorities in the east. Popes and Western councils of this era gave increasing approbation to the doctrine (Haddad, 2002; Chadwick 2003). As the Church in the West began to employ the Filioque in councils and creedal statements, the doctrine took on an increasingly symbolic role as the nexus for the treatment of three controversial issues: (1) the doctrinal unity of the Eastern and Western Churches regarding the doctrine of God, (2) the overarching doctrinal and juridical authority of the pope, and (3) the political unity of the Christian empire. In later disputes between East and West theologians readily distinguished these three issues conceptually, but existentially they have remained deeply intertwined for centuries. Subsequent to 'the schism of 1054' the Catholic Church continued to teach the doctrine of the Filioque and elevated it to the status of a dogma at the Second Council of Lyon (1274) and again at the Council of Florence (1438–45). Although these councils were aimed at the reconciliation of East and West, their language regarding the spiration of the Spirit from the Father and the Son 'as from one unique principle' was to gain little approbation in the Eastern Christian world.

We will return later to the possibility of an ecumenical convergence of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in discussions regarding the Holy Spirit's procession. Here, however, it is helpful to consider two arguments from St Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) in support of the doctrine of the Filioque, as well as his reflections on the relational character of the Spirit as love. Aquinas's arguments in these matters touch upon the very nature of Trinitarian theology as such, and they invite us to probe more deeply the way theological language can and should be used to describe rightly the mystery of God.

A first argument of Aquinas stems from his understanding of the correlation between divine missions and divine processions. Just as the persons in God proceed eternally from one another, so likewise the Son and Spirit are sent from the Father into the world in

their missions to save and divinize the human person. What is the difference between a procession and a mission? The former is eternal and is constitutive of the identity of God as such. The latter, according to Aquinas, is simply the procession itself, rendered present to the creation in a new way by grace. '[A divine mission] includes the eternal procession, with the addition of a temporal effect' (*ST* I, q. 43, a. 2, ad 3). The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son eternally but is sent on mission temporally into the world to save and divinize, being present in the world in a new way, as he who is from the Father and the Son. The idea being expressed here is of decisive importance: nothing that arises in the economy adds anything or alters anything that is proper to the divine identity of God as such. Rather the opposite is the case: by means of the divine missions, God in his immutable perfection invites spiritual creatures to participate in his uncreated life, a life characterized eternally by the processions of the Word and the Spirit.

(p. 189) It follows from this line of thinking that *no new relations* between the persons who are God can arise by virtue of the economy alone. The missions are not the occasion for an evolution within the divine life of God, nor do creation and salvation history enrich the pure actuality and infinite perfection of God in any way. Therefore, if there are relations between the persons *ad intra* that are truly revealed *in the economy* by Scripture, then these same relations *must be constitutive of who God is eternally*, and cannot be an addition, or alteration of God for the sake of the economy, as if the work of salvation in turn invited God into some form of development. But such a personal relation is precisely what is revealed in John 15:26 where Christ promises to send the Spirit upon the apostles. For only if the Spirit is eternally relative to the Son as one who proceeds from him personally (by a relation of origin) can Christ in turn promise as the Son made man to send the Spirit upon the Church economically (*In Ioan.* 15, lec. 5, 2061). Otherwise, there transpires by virtue of the creation and the economy a 'new relation' of the Spirit to the person of the Son, one that must necessarily introduce change into the very identity of God.

Of course, one can object that this is precisely what transpires in the economy. The idea of a historical becoming of the Trinity is not unheard of in modern Protestant theology where it is most often invoked to assert that the event of the crucifixion enters into the very being and relations of the persons of God (see Jüngel, Moltmann, Jenson, and others). Modern Orthodox thinkers such as David Bentley Hart, however, rightly criticize such historicizations of the divine as problematic human projections. Hart introduces a soteriological dimension to the argument: only if God is immutably and impassibly himself in utter transcendence of his creation can he in turn save the creation precisely as the God of love who is not subject to evil but who is free from any alteration to his goodness by the vicissitudes of history (Hart 2003). Such an idea converges felicitously with the reasoning of Aquinas. The Holy Spirit in the economy is revealed in his goodness and love as one sent by the Son to save us from death. This revelation of the Spirit of Christ in time is not a modalist façade that corresponds only to God's outer activity. Rather, it unveils the inner essence of the living God as such, as he who transcends creation as its creator and who alone can overcome the threats of suffering, death and non-being, conforming man to the divine life in the process. But if the personal relation of the Spirit of love to Christ the Saviour is unveiled in time, it must also be grounded in the very mystery of

God himself, such that the Spirit originates from the Son eternally. To say otherwise is to surrender God's transcendent mystery to the immanent world of human history allowing the human tribulation that called forth the divine missions to obscure the eternal identity of God and his victory of impassible love.

A second argument of Aquinas pertains to the analogical character of speech concerning God. St Thomas notes that all analogical attributions of natural terms to the mystery of God are drawn from the generic categories that constitute all human conceptual speech. That is to say, following Aristotle's *Categories*, we can ascribe terms to realities around us that denote individuals, essences, qualities, quantities, relations, action, receptivity, time, place, position, and environment. Yet with regard to God, some of these generic terms are inapplicable. God is not determined by time and place, but (p. 190) is ineffably eternal and omnipresent. He is not determined by quantity or passive receptivity because he is not a body, but the author of all physical beings, and is himself a pure actuality of subsistent wisdom and love. If we ascribe to God an essential nature (*ousia, essentia*), qualities (wisdom, love, power, and so forth) or actions (creation, salvation) then these terms must pertain to the divine essence and life as such, which are common to the three persons. Consequently, the only term of our categorical mode of understanding that can be employed to denote the distinction of persons in God is that of the relation. It is because the Son possesses all that the Father has (all that is proper to the divine essence, its qualities, actions, and so forth) that he can be distinguished only by his relation of origin as the Word who is eternally begotten from the wisdom of the Father. If the Spirit proceeds only from the Father, then, and not from the Son, he is distinguished from the Father by his relation of origin, but is *in no way distinguishable from the Son* (*ST* I, q. 36, a. 2; *In Ioan*. 15, lec. 5, 2064). Consequently, if there is to be a theological intelligibility to the real distinction between the Son and the Spirit, then one of the two must originate from the other. Scripture denotes for us which option conforms to revelation: the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is distinct from the Father and the Son not because he differs in essence, qualities, or action, but because he alone proceeds relationally from both the Father and the Son as from one principle.

It could be argued that St Thomas's reasoning amounts to a form of rationalism that would seek to trap human reflection on the mystery of the Triune God within the constraints of an Aristotelian conceptualization of reality. In truth, however, what he is demonstrating is much more profound. For as in his broader doctrine of analogical predication concerning God, Aquinas is advancing between two extremes: one of an apophaticism that would employ terms for God only equivocally, so that no speech we could use would be capable of signifying the mystery of God, and another extreme of univocity in which we would be able to understand God's inner mystery adequately by recourse to our ordinary human understanding and terms (see *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5). The notion of analogy allows one to claim that the Holy Spirit is truly—although very imperfectly—intelligible as a person distinct from the Father and the Son (due to our analogical application of the notion of relations of origin). Yet the Holy Spirit is also a person in a wholly other way from created human persons because he partakes fully of the ineffable divine essence of God, and three persons who are one in being is something wholly transcendent of our ordinary

experience and concepts. His mystery is accessible to human thought in faith, but only indirectly and as encompassed by mystery. Were we to refuse that there is a relation of origin between the Son and the Spirit, we would be obliged into one of two quandaries: either the two divine persons are differentiated by some other term (such as nature, quality, or action) in which case one is subordinate to the other and Christian monotheism is implicitly undermined, or their distinction as persons who both proceed from the Father is literally inconceivable, so that the distinct mystery of the Trinity is at base unintelligible—purely extrinsic to human understanding—and it cannot be assimilated by human thought, even when addressed by divine revelation. The first extreme is that of Aetius and Eunomius, the neo-Arian opponents of the Cappadocians who claimed that human concepts were adequate (p. 191) to define and understand the mystery of God the Father. Since his essential deity was seen to exclude any notion of procession or relation, the Son and Spirit could not be understood to be God. The other extreme is that of an apophatic Christian agnosticism that would minimize the intelligibility of the Trinitarian mystery to such a degree as to render its theological meaning intrinsically obscure. (Thomists would tend to see this tendency manifest in the theology of Photius, with his seeming refusal to speculate on the eternal relation of the Spirit and the Son.) In fact, a fair analysis of Aquinas's argumentation can lead to the coherent claim that he is a true inheritor of the Cappadocian understanding of the Triune God, in that he successfully safeguards the twofold truth of the distinction of persons by recourse to the relations of origin (generation and spiration), and that of the monotheistic character of the three persons due to their equal possession of the ineffable divine essence. Because the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, he is truly distinguishable from each relationally, and because he is identical with them in all else, he is truly the one God of Israel and in no way a subordinate principle. All that is proper to the Father as God is equally proper to the Son, and to their Spirit. There is nothing found within the Father or the Son that is not also found within the Spirit, who is God. And yet the Father is the unique source of the whole Trinitarian life that he communicates to the Son and the Spirit.

Aquinas's acute sensitivity to this patristic habit of thought challenges him in turn to deepen thinking regarding the Augustinian 'psychological analogy', so as to emphasize that the Son who is the Word and the Spirit who is charity are denoted by these proper terms (Word, Love) only because the terms themselves are subject to being used to denote relations of origin, and not merely essential terms (attributes common to the three persons). So, for instance, the Son is called the Word of the Father not because he is in any way the source of the Father's wisdom (the essential wisdom of God), but because he is the immanent expression of the Father's wisdom, analogous to an interior word of the human mind that is expressive of a mental concept. The human word that expresses thought inwardly is relative to the mind from which it proceeds, so that the analogical use of the notion 'word' to describe the Son is a relational concept (*SCG* 4, 11). Similarly with love: the Spirit is described as the Love of the Father and the Son not by recourse to an essential notion (because God is subsistent love by nature, and this love is equally common to the three persons) but a relational notion. How, then, can love be relational if it proceeds from one who loves in view of the other who is loved and loves in return? St

Thomas here employs the analogy of the voluntary ‘inclination’ or ‘impulse’ towards the person loved that love implies in the one who loves (*SCG* 4, 19; Durand, 2005). The Holy Spirit is a person who proceeds as the relational love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father. Consequently, he is the expression of a two-fold immanent inclination of the Father toward the Son and of the Son toward the Father, eternally spirated forth from both ‘simultaneously’ as an expression of mutual love. This procession of love is immanent to the Father and the Son in their unity, and so it proceeds from both of them as from one source. At the same time, the begotten Son also receives from the unoriginate Father the gift of spirating the love of the Spirit, insofar as he receives all that he has from the Father (*ST* I, q. 36, a. 3). It is true to say, then, (p. 192) both that the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and that the Spirit is their mutual bond of love.

Ecumenical Prospects

Orthodox theologians have always recognized that the Filioque theology of the West has called for some form of response from within the Eastern tradition. Classically, such a response takes one of three forms. First, there are those who have rejected the notion unequivocally as a doctrinal error, insisting upon the irreducible truth of the generation of the Son from the Father and the spiration/procession of the Spirit from the Father (and not the Son). Photius’s theology could be seen a representative of this view. The monarchal primacy of the Father is preserved through a respect for the mystery of God that does not seek to resolve the question of the eternal relation between the Son and the Spirit. A second tendency (less common but historically enduring) has been to show a qualified sympathy for the Western doctrine, understanding a potential convergence between the Filioque and the classical Eastern idea that the Spirit proceeds from the Father ‘through the Son’. Among the more pre-eminent defenders of this position is St Maximus the Confessor (*c.*580–662).

However, the third and most prominent trend is that envisaged by historical figures such as Gregory of Cyprus (1241–90) and St Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), and which is articulated in modern Orthodox theology by such seminal figures as Vladimir Lossky and Dumitru Stăniloae. This position, generally speaking, tends to maintain that the doctrine of the Filioque as conceived in the Augustinian tradition is problematic. One reason for this is that it introduces the idea that a hypostatic property of the Father (his being the unique source of Trinitarian life) is communicable to the Son with regard to the Spirit. But what is shared by the persons is the divine nature and life, not personal properties as such, so that if the Father gives the power of spiration to the Son, he does so by virtue of their shared divine nature. This, however, seems to make the divine essence the source of the spiration of the Spirit. Therefore, either the Spirit must also possess the power to spirate himself since he, too, is God by nature (which is an absurd idea) or he proceeds from the divine essence of the Father and the Son as a creature (which is blasphemous). At the same time, this Palamite tradition tends to see positive value in the Filioque doctrine insofar as the doctrine challenges or invites Orthodox thought to consider the eternal and temporal relations of the Spirit and the Son. Orthodox theologians tend therefore to dis-

tinguish the Spirit's relation to the Son (1) in the eternal mystery of God and (2) in the divine economy. In the eternal life of God the Spirit proceeds forth from the Father to rest upon the Son, as the resplendence or glory of the Son, who is the recipient of the Father's eternal love. In the economy the Spirit is sent by the Father upon the Church *through* the Son made man, who is the principle of divinization of creatures within the economy. The Son and the Spirit thus work together to sanctify human beings, and the Spirit within the economy is the Spirit of the Son. Yet both persons come (p. 193) forth uniquely from the Father who sends the Spirit upon the Son, and sends him into the world as the Spirit of his Son.

The Romanian theologian Dumitru Stăniloae writes:

> The Father does not beget the Son, and does not cause the Spirit to proceed as two separate actions, as two Persons who remain separated; but the begetting and the procession, although distinct, are united. Consequently the Person of the Son and the Person of the Spirit also remain united, or interior, to one another … [T]hough the Spirit's manifestation is by the Son, his coming into existence is not by the Son, even if he is united to the begetting of the Son … [T]he shining out from the Son marks a progress in the existence which the Spirit receives from the Father, one might say a fulfilment, the achievement of the end for which he came into existence
>
> (Stăniloae, 1981: 183–184).

Such a view suggests points of convergence with the Latin tradition. Arguably, however, its criticism of the Filioque fails to recognize that there is nothing incoherent or contradictory with the idea of the Son partaking personally in a personal characteristic that the Father has (as the source of the Spirit), and that this is precisely what would distinguish him from both the Father (who unlike him is the unbegotten source of the Spirit) and the Spirit (who unlike him proceeds from both the Father and the Son). Furthermore, there is a theological ambiguity to the notion that there exist new relations between the persons either (1) at the *term* of the intra-Trinitarian processions, rather than at their origins, or (2) arising in the economy or through divine agency *ad extra* that are distinct from the eternal relations of God in himself. Such ideas risk to straddle the theologian with either modalist ideas of a God distinct in revelation from what he is in himself, or of a subordinationism in which the Spirit and Son do not partake fully of a perfection of their relations except through an intra-divine becoming, or by virtue of their presence in creaturely history. After all, to whom is the Spirit being manifest? What kind of new perfection does such manifestation entail?

Contemporary Catholic–Orthodox discussions of the Eastern and Western positions of thought on this matter have led to a number of healthy clarifications. On the one hand, the Catholic Church has insisted in recent decades that Eastern Churches in communion with Rome should not be obliged to mention the Filioque in the recitation of the creed. This suggests that the Western Church does not see the explicit acceptance of the doctrine as a condition for Church unity, so long as the Filioque is not deemed heretical in

the East, but is at least given warrant as a legitimate theological opinion or way of approaching the mystery of God. Orthodox leaders are often willing to work towards this form of consensus through theological dialogue. Similarly, the Catholic Church has emphasized in her universal *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (*CCC*) that the Father 'as the principle without principle, is the first origin of the Spirit, but also that as Father of the only Son, he is, with the Son, the single principle from which the Holy Spirit proceeds' (*CCC* 248). This idea is given further expression in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity's 1995 document 'The Greek and Latin Traditions (p. 194) Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit'. Here an ecumenical interpretation of the Filioque is presented (taken from Maximus the Confessor's *Letter to Marinus*) which has recourse to the idea of perichoresis, the indwelling of the Son in the Father. One can affirm that the Father is the unique source of the Spirit but it must be added that he is so precisely *as* Father, that is to say, as the eternal Father of his only-begotten Son and Word. Consequently, the Son is present in the Father from whom the Spirit proceeds. 'The Spirit does not precede the Son, since the Son characterizes as Father the Father from whom the Spirit takes his origin, according to the Trinitarian order. But the spiration of the Spirit from the Father takes place by and through (the two senses of *dia* in Greek) the generation of the Son, to which it gives its Trinitarian character'. This interpretation of the doctrine of the Filioque is meant to converge with classical Cappadocian and Palamite assertions that the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son. Exploratory formulations such as these invite Catholic and Orthodox interlocutors alike to consider ways that the Filioque can be seen as a legitimate theological development compatible at base with the insights of the Eastern Christian tradition (see Garrigues 1981). If both sides are willing to seek ways of understanding positively each other's interpretations of the eternal and temporal relations of the Son and Spirit, the Filioque dispute can become the occasion for a deepening understanding of Trinitarian life as it is manifested in the life of Jesus Christ. In the formulation of the *Catechism*: 'This legitimate complementarity provided it does not become rigid, does not affect the identity of faith in the reality of the same mystery confessed'. Indeed, it can enrich our understanding of that reality.

The Holy Spirit as the Uncreated Soul of the Church

In the Nicene Creed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is mentioned just before that of the Church, signifying that the mystical body of Christ is sustained and upheld in being and in grace by the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit. The Church is united by the graces of faith, hope, and love, as well as the sacramental graces, virtues, and charisms that are present in her living members. But these 'created graces' that sanctify Christ's faithful are also ultimately the fruit of the Holy Spirit himself, who animates the body of Christ from within, unifying and enlivening that body as an uncreated living principle. The Church lives by the Spirit of Christ as her soul, in view of her union with the Father. 'The

Holy Spirit is likened to the heart [of the Church], since he invisibly enlivens and unifies the Church' (*ST* 3, q. 8, a. 1, ad 3). From this basic thought, three ideas follow.

First, the Church is present in the world not only visibly but also invisibly, there where the Holy Spirit is at work preparing and leading souls to the encounter with Christ. This work of the Spirit is universal in scope, present throughout history, and throughout the (p. 195) comprehensive diversity of human cultures. Yet this universal activity is also always a preparation for the uniquely saving Gospel of Christ, and thus it attains its apotheosis only in the ecclesial realization of visible unity that is centred in Christ and made possible by his sacramental economy. Theologically speaking, the signs of the Spirit acting in non-Christian persons and cultures are discerned most certainly there where the work of grace becomes manifest by way of a free decision for life in the Church. At the same time, his work is presumed to be universal in scope and cannot be reduced to what is given to human sight or measured in visible results. Consequently, the mission of the Church implies vigorous and intelligent proclamation of the Gospel *and* dialogue that seeks to understand in depth the virtues, values, and insights of interlocutors of non-Christian identity. This two-fold approach to evangelization seeks to be faithful simultaneously to the universal work of the Spirit and the Christological and ecclesiological concentration of his activity.

Second, the Holy Spirit is the uncreated charity of the Father and the Son, and consequently his special note of presence in the visible Catholic Church is that unity that is obtained only through mutual love (Journet 1999). This principle has to characterize every other note of ecclesial unity, be it the unity that arises from sacramental regeneration and communion, liturgical worship, doctrinal fidelity to the truth, or juridical and religious obedience. Without the inner animating dynamic of the love of God and neighbour, the life of the Church would wither into nothingness. However, the Church is continuously renewed by the Holy Spirit such that the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church is sustained by an interior love. Her obedience to God and her teaching and proclamation are expressions of the 'Spirit of truth' (John 15:26) who guides her interiorly and who is himself an inextinguishable source of love for all mankind. 'By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (John 13:35).

Last, the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church is eschatological in orientation. Ecclesial unity in the Spirit in this life is anticipatory of a mystery that is coming to be. It will take on perfect expression in the life of heaven, where it is consummated in the beatific vision by means of the light of glory. The *Apocalypse* ends with a vision of heaven in which the Spirit inspires the Church inwardly to loving communion with Christ as the eternal bridegroom (Rev. 22:1–5, 17). Theologically speaking, this entails the elevation of human souls to the vision of God face to face, by which they encounter the Father directly in the gaze upon his uncreated Word, and perceive all things (incomprehensively) in him. This also entails the radical outpouring of the Spirit who is love into the hearts of all the blessed, so that animated by the Spirit they might love with the measure of charity that this vision affords them, a love that unites them forever with God in his love for himself, and with one another in friendship. This mystical life in the Spirit is anticipated even now in the

Church through loving worship, the practice of virtue, and the experience of charity. In the life of the world to come it will blossom, as the human will comes to rest in that personal love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father, a love who is the Holy Spirit of God.

Suggested Reading

On the subject of this chapter see also *CCC* 687-747.

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The Church

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This essay begins by emphasizing that the Church is the gathering into one of the children of God, dispersed by sin. The idea of communion is thus vital for an understanding of the Church, and this communion is particularly a work of the Holy Spirit. The Second Vatican Council reflected intently on the nature of the Church, incorporating biblical and patristic emphases, in the light of subsequent scholastic discussions and with a constant concern to enhance the unity to which Christ calls all Christians. The essay then considers historically the development of ecclesiology though the Second Vatican Council. It ends by considering the shifts in ecclesiological teaching embraced by Vatican II.

Keywords: Church, communion, koinonia, Holy Spirit, ecclesiology, Vatican II, body of Christ, people of God, ecumenism

> ‘The Church’ is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ’s Body.
>
> (*CCC* 752)

THIS succinct definition of the Church from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* conveys several fundamental points. First, the idea of ‘gathering’ or ‘assembly’, which is the basic meaning of the Greek word *ekklesia* (= *ek*, out of + *kaleo*, to call), that is translated as ‘church.’ Jesus died ‘to gather into one the dispersed children of God’ (John 11:51–52). What has dispersed the children of God is sin, the hallmark of which is separation and enmity. The hallmark of God’s own life is the very opposite, namely unity and love. The Church is both the sign and the effect of God’s grace active in the world through the work of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of humanity; it is a *gathering*. Second, the titles ‘people of God’ and ‘body of Christ’: God’s work of gathering began with the call of Abraham, who was promised countless descendants (Gen. 12:1–2; 15:2–6), and with the formation of the chosen people of Israel, the people of

God (Lev. 26:12). In the fullness of time, God sent his own Son (Heb. 1:1–4), Jesus Christ, born as a member of this people, in order to gather the whole world to himself and unite it in himself (Eph. 1:9–10), as the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12–30), such that Paul can say to the gentile Galatians: 'if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise' (Gal. 3:29).

The definition also indicates, thirdly, that the overall gathering of the Church exists as many local gatherings, local communities, which assemble regularly for liturgical celebrations of word and sacrament. The principal Christian liturgy from earliest times has been the weekly Eucharist, the 'breaking of bread' (Acts 2:42–27; 20:7–12), often called the 'Mass' in the Catholic Church, which always begins with the proclamation of the word of God (the 'Liturgy of the Word'), and proceeds to the offering of the gifts of bread and wine, and communion in the body and blood of Christ (the 'Liturgy of the Eucharist'). In this celebration, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:26–29; (p. 199) Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26), the Christian assembly, the Church, receives the body of Christ and so becomes the body of Christ:

> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing [*koinonia*] in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing [*koinonia*] in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread
>
> (1 Cor. 10:16–17).

The idea of *communion* (*communio* in Latin; *koinonia* in Greek) is crucial for an understanding of the Church. Horizontally, so to speak, 'communion' refers to the gathering that the Church is, but described more theologically, since the primordial communion is that of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Trinity, and the use of this term for the Church indicates that the communion of Christians as brothers and sisters in Christ is actually a reflection of and a participation in the communion life of God, who is one in three persons. We have that participation by God's gracious gift; a vertical communion sustains the horizontal—indeed the word *koinonia* primarily means *participation*. The first gift is that of the Son who took flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Spirit (Luke 1:35). Christ was born to gather us to himself, and the gift which causes the gathering is regularly renewed; by the power of the same Spirit, the people of God are gathered today by the gifts of word and sacrament. Christians receive 'holy communion' in the Eucharist. The Church is what it is thanks to this regularly renewed gift, hence the phrase coined by Henri de Lubac (1896–1991): 'the Eucharist makes the Church' (de Lubac 2006: 88). The recovery of the link between Eucharist and Church after its neglect in the second millennium is one of the primary features of recent ecclesiology, both Catholic and ecumenical (McPartlan 2010).

Communion is particularly the work of the Holy Spirit: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion [*koinonia*] of the Holy Spirit be with all of you' (2 Cor. 13:13). The Creed regularly recited at the Eucharist has a fundamentally Trinitarian structure, professing belief in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, re-

spectively, and it is significant that mention of the Church is made under the works of the Spirit. The Apostles' Creed states: 'I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints [*communio sanctorum*]'. *Communio sanctorum* has a double meaning, since *sanctorum* is the genitive plural both of *sancti* (the saints, the holy people), and *sancta* (word and sacrament), the holy gifts, especially the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Originally, then, the Creed recognized both the vertical and horizontal senses of communion, the gift and the gathering. The proclamation, 'Holy gifts for the holy people', is regularly used in Eastern liturgies. 'The faithful (*sancti*) are fed by Christ's holy body and blood (*sancta*) to grow in the communion of the Holy Spirit (*koinonia*) and to communicate it to the world' (*CCC* 948).

The Church receives the gift of communion so as to live a life of communion in the world as a sign of God's grace at work, and as an invitation to humanity to find peace and reconciliation in Christ. As the Second Vatican Council proclaimed at the start of its dogmatic constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, the Church is 'a sign and (p. 200) instrument … of communion with God and of unity among all people,' and it is thus in the nature of a 'sacrament' (*LG* 1). Twenty years after the council, the Synod of Bishops held in 1985 powerfully synthesized this teaching: 'The Church as communion is a sacrament for the salvation of the world' (Synod of Bishops 1985: II. D. 1).

This short sentence strikingly combines the profound mystery of communion which lies at the heart of the Church and the vigorous task of mission, which, likewise is essential to it. Vatican II linked both of these to the primordial mystery of the Trinity. It taught that the Church is 'a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (*LG* 4, quoting Cyprian, *De Orat. Dom.* 23), and, in its decree on the Church's missionary activity, that 'The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit' (*AG* 2; see also *CCC* 738). Repeated references to the Trinity (see *CCC* 759, 763, 767 and 781, 787, 797) indicate how mature and developed the council's ecclesiological doctrine was.

No previous ecumenical council reflected on the Church itself as intensely as did Vatican II, and no other Christian tradition has engaged in a self-examination so thorough as that undertaken by the Catholic Church at Vatican II. As Pope John XXIII who called the council wished, Vatican II had a deeply ecumenical intention: 'The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council' (*UR* 1); and the ecclesiological teaching of the council has been and remains a major resource for the whole Christian family. Its teaching naturally reflected significant developments during the mainly scholastic second millennium, but it was greatly enriched with insights from the Scriptures and the Church fathers of the first millennium, thanks to the biblical and patristic renewal movements. In order to appreciate its teaching, let us therefore start by considering briefly the Scriptures and the patristic and scholastic eras.

The Scriptures and the Four Marks of the Church

Even before the coming of Christ, *ekklesia* was used in the Septuagint (third century BC) to translate the Hebrew word *qahal*, which refers in the Old Testament to the assembly of the chosen people (e.g. Exod. 12:6; Num. 14:5; Deut. 5:22; 9:10; 10:4), especially their solemn assembly before God to receive the Law (see *CCC* 751). In their solemn assembly, which prefigures the Christian celebration of the Eucharist, the people accept the Law and ratify the covenant with God in a ritual that notably involves the 'blood of the covenant'. They are a covenant people (Exod. 24:3–8).

The first characteristic of the people, precisely as the people of God, is that they are *holy*, they belong to God: 'you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation' (Exod. 19:6); 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy' (Lev. 19:2). In the New (p. 201) Testament, these injunctions are applied to the Christian people: 'you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people' (1 Pet. 2:9; also 1:15–16), as also is the term *ekklesia* (e.g. 1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1). Evidently, the early Christian community understood itself as 'heir' to the chosen people of Israel (*CCC* 751), in and through Christ. They, too, bear the name *ekklesia*, most of all when gathered in solemn assembly: St Paul refers to the gathering of the Corinthians for the Eucharist as their gathering 'as a church [*en ekklesia*]' (1 Cor. 11:18).

In its teaching on the holiness of the Church, the *Catechism* states: 'Christ … loved the Church as his Bride, giving himself up for her so as to sanctify her; he joined her to himself as his body and endowed her with the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God' (*CCC* 823, quoting *LG* 39; see also Eph. 5:25–26). The Church's *holiness* thus comes from Christ: 'United with Christ, the Church is sanctified by him; through him and with him she becomes sanctifying', and all of her activities are directed towards the sanctification of humanity in Christ (*CCC* 824). Her *catholicity* comes from him, too, in a double sense. First of all, 'the Church is catholic because Christ is present in her' with all the fullness of salvation (*CCC* 830)—a qualitative catholicity—and the Church is catholic also because she is the bearer of his mission to the whole human race—a quantitative catholicity. 'The character of universality which adorns the People of God is a gift from the Lord himself whereby the Catholic Church ceaselessly and efficaciously seeks for the return of all humanity and its goods, under Christ the Head in the unity of his Spirit' (*CCC* 831, quoting *LG* 13).

The Scriptures abound with texts teaching the *oneness* of the Church: there is 'one body and one Spirit … one hope … one Lord, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:4–5); 'one bread … one body' (1 Cor. 10:17); one bride (Rev. 21:2, 9–10); and there is to be 'one flock, one shepherd' (John 10:16; 17:21). The *Catechism* explains that the Church is one because of her source in the one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, because of her founder, who restored the unity of all in 'one people and one body', and because of her one 'soul,' namely the Holy Spirit, who is 'the principle of the Church's unity' (*CCC* 813; quoting *GS*

78 and *UR* 2). The oneness of the Church is also implicit when the *Catechism* highlights the Church's roots in the one people of Israel and the transition from this people to the community led by the twelve apostles with Peter as their head. 'Representing the twelve tribes of Israel, they [the apostles] are the foundation stones of the new Jerusalem' (*CCC* 765; see also Rev. 21: 12–14). In fact, the Church is *apostolic* in three ways: as well as being founded on the apostles, she keeps and hands on the apostles' teaching, and she continues to be led by the successors of the apostles, namely the bishops, in union with the pope, 'the successor of Peter, the Church's supreme pastor' (*CCC* 857, quoting *AG* 5).

The Patristic Era: The Church as a Communion of Local Churches

The idea that bishops succeed the apostles is found early in Christian writings. The First Letter of Clement to the Corinthians (*c*.96 AD) teaches that Christ was sent by God, that (p. 202) the apostles were sent by Christ, and that they in turn appointed bishops and deacons (ch. 2). Irenaeus of Lyon (*c*.130–*c*.200 AD) taught that authentic teaching could be sought from bishops who were verifiable successors of the apostles, and that lists of successors could be drawn up in each place. He himself gave a list for the local church of Rome, with twelve successors to the apostles Peter and Paul who were martyred there (*Adv. Haer.* 3. 3.3; Irenaeus 2012: 33). Rome was a sure reference point for doctrine: 'For with this Church [Rome], by reason of its pre-eminence [*propter potentiorem principalitatem*], the whole Church, that is the faithful everywhere, must necessarily be in accord' (quoted at *CCC* 834; *Adv. Haer.*, 3. 3.2; Irenaeus 2012: 32).

The *Apostolic Tradition*, a work perhaps originating in the early third century, understands the bishops as the successors of the apostles and representatives of Christ among his people. Its ordination prayer for a bishop asks of God: 'Pour forth that power which is from you, of the spirit of leadership that you gave to your beloved Son Jesus Christ, which he gave to the holy apostles, who established the church in every place'. It continues: '[Bestow, Father,] on this your servant, whom you have chosen for the episcopate, to feed your holy flock and to exercise the high priesthood for you without blame, ministering night and day; unceasingly to propitiate your countenance, and to offer to you the holy gifts of your church' (*Apostolic Tradition* 3. 3–4; Bradshaw et al. 2002: 30). The bishop both leads and feeds his people; that is, he presides over the local church and presides at the Eucharist, too, exercising the high priesthood and offering the gifts. These roles were consistently combined in the first three centuries (Legrand 1987). Presbyters formed an advisory body to the bishop.

Though he does not describe bishops as successors of the apostles, Ignatius of Antioch (*c*. AD 107) already understands that only the bishop who leads the local church should preside at the Eucharist. 'Where the bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is present, there is the catholic Church' (*Letter to the Smyrnaeans* 8; Ehrman 2003: 303–304). In the communion of the local churches, he recognizes a particular role for the local church of Rome: it 'presides in charity' (quoted at *CCC* 834; *Let-*

ter to the Romans, pro.; Ehrman 2003: 269). Cyprian of Carthage (d.258) likewise understands the bishops as the *priests* of the Church, and understands the episcopacy itself as a single shared responsibility among all the bishops: 'the episcopate is one [and] each holds his part of it in unity [with the others] (*episcopatus unus est cuius a singulis in solidum pars tenetur*)' (*De unit. eccl. Cath.* 5; Cyprian 1958: 99–100). He regards each bishop as succeeding all of the apostles, including Peter. Peter's chair is to be found in every local church, but particularly in Rome (*ep.* 59.14; Cyprian 1964: 186).

Rome was distinguished among the local churches from an early date as the place of martyrdom of the princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul. A more specific focus just on Peter, and the idea that the bishop of Rome—the pope—stands among the bishops who succeed the apostles as the successor of Peter, is a later idea that developed only in the Christian West. It is found, for instance, in the sermons of Pope Leo the Great (d.461); for example, *Serm.* 94, 2; 95, 3 (Leo 1996: 391, 396).

It was mainly after the huge expansion of the Church when the Roman Empire became Christian in the fourth century that parishes were formed and that presbyters (p. 203) were dispersed to care for the parishes, one in each place. Presbyters themselves became regular eucharistic presiders, i.e. parish priests. Bishops correspondingly started to become primarily governing figures. Centuries later, the scholastics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries taught that there were two powers in the Church, the power of order, which culminated in the priest, and the power of jurisdiction that bishops had in addition (Villemin 2003). The first was received from God in the sacrament of holy orders, and it gave full power to transform bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and to offer the Mass. The second was received from the pope who had the fullness of governing power (*plenitudo potestatis*) over the Church and who called each bishop 'to share his solicitude'. The scholastics believed that the sacrament of holy orders culminated in the priest, and that becoming a bishop was not an ordination but a consecration. In the wake of the Gregorian Reform (see Pope Gregory VII, 1073–1085), the Church was increasingly understood as 'a single society under the authority of the pope', the pope being the 'universal bishop' (Congar 1964: 238).

The Scholastic Era: The Church as a Perfect Society

Yves Congar (1904–95) highlights the major shift, early in the second millennium, from 'an ecclesiology of the *ecclesia*', 'an ecclesiology of communion', one that comprehends the whole community, to 'an ecclesiology of powers', 'an ecclesiology of the institution', a more juridical and functional account (Congar 1967: 261). With regard to bishops, 'reciprocity among equals was outweighed by jurisdiction from above'. 'The vertical lines of authority from Rome to the bishops replaced the horizontal lines of communion among bishops. The pope came to be viewed as … the sovereign bishop of the Catholic Church' (Dulles 1996: 130). Eamon Duffy refers to 'the medieval reimagining of the Church not as a communion of local churches, but as a single international organisation

with the Pope at its head'. Not content with the title 'vicar of Peter' that his predecessors had used, Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) was the first to style himself 'vicar of Christ' (Duffy 2006: 128, 130).

In the wake of eucharistic controversy, accounts of this sacrament now focused primarily on the marvel of the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ; the further transformation of the community itself into his body by the reception of the Eucharist, so important for the fathers of the Church, was neglected (de Lubac 2006). The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) endorsed the idea of 'transubstantiation' for the transformation of the bread and wine in the Mass, and the Second Council of Lyons (1274) gave the first conciliar listing of seven sacraments, the Eucharist being one of them, but only one among seven. 'Like any other society, the Church was now, in a certain sense, a juridical instrument, a complex of laws.' She also had the sacraments, but 'the Eucharist was just one of these—one liturgical act among others, no longer (p. 204) the encompassing orbit and dynamic centre of ecclesial existence per se' (Ratzinger 1987: 255). Joseph Ratzinger refers to this 'separation of the doctrine of the Eucharist and ecclesiology' as 'one of the most unfortunate pages of medieval theology'. 'A doctrine of the Eucharist that is not related to the community of the Church misses its essence as does an ecclesiology that is not conceived with the Eucharist as its centre' (Ratzinger 1965: 28).

During the high middle ages and for centuries to come, Popes fought hard for the independence of the Church from the state and from civil authority. The idea of the Church as a 'perfect society' (*societas perfecta*) now came to the fore (Congar 1986a: 132–135), 'perfect' primarily meaning not morally perfect but 'complete' (Latin, *perfecta*). In other words, the Church was fully equipped to run its own affairs and did not need to be incorporated into and run by the state; it had its own laws and leadership, most prominently the pope himself. Paradoxically, as the Church asserted its own independence from civil society and earthly kingdoms, it took on the trappings of a kingdom and increasingly understood its head as the 'sovereign pontiff' (Pottmeyer 1998: 43). These developments reached their height in the nineteenth century with the definitions of papal primacy and infallibility at the First Vatican Council (1869–70), but a pyramidal understanding of the Church under the pope at its summit is characteristic of the second millennium as a whole in the Catholic West. The development of such an understanding was one of the prime causes of the schism between Christian West and East, traditionally dated to 1054, which resulted in what are now called the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, respectively. The Eastern Church retained a sacramental and eucharistic understanding of the Church as a communion of local churches.

A serious schism within the Western Church itself saw at first two and then three rival popes (1378–1417), and the unitary view of the Church under the supreme authority of the pope fell into crisis (Henn 2000: 117–123). The Council of Constance (1414–18) which resolved the crisis marked the high point of an alternative view of the Church, according to which supreme authority resided in a council of bishops, and ultimately in the Church as a whole, to which the pope himself was answerable. Essential to this view, known as 'conciliarism,' is a distinction between the pope and the bishops such that the pope can

be held accountable by a council of bishops. The papacy which emerged from Constance with a single new occupant, Martin V (1417–1431), gradually reasserted its authority. One legacy of this traumatic period was, however, the need to define properly the relationship between the pope and the bishops.

Protestant emphases at the time of the Reformation on the inwardness and invisibility of the Church only prompted Catholic theology to heighten emphasis on the visibility of the Church and its clear lines of authority. Around 1590, Robert Bellarmine asserted that the Church was as visible as the kingdom of France or the republic of Venice. He defined it as: 'the assembly of people bound together by the profession of the same Christian faith and the communion of the same sacraments under the government of legitimate pastors, above all the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff' (*Disputationes de controversiis*, 4 [*De Conciliis*], book 3, ch. 2). In due course, the position and prerogatives of the papacy were so stressed by Vatican I that the role of the bishops rather fell into (p. 205) the shade, and it was thought by many that no further councils would need to be held; the pope could now lead and teach alone. In that light, the most significant thing about Vatican II was that it took place at all. It 'reopened the chapter in the Church's book of conciliar life' (Congar 1986b: 338–342), and central to its purpose was a serious attempt to find the right balance between the authority of bishops and that of the pope.

In its dogmatic constitution, *Pastor aeternus* (1870), Vatican I taught that the pope has 'ordinary', 'immediate', and 'episcopal' authority over the Church as a whole, both pastors and faithful (DS 3060). It also taught that bishops have ordinary and immediate episcopal jurisdiction over their own flocks. Though it may sound as if this makes bishops simply middle managers who do the pope's bidding, the German hierarchy refuted such suggestions in 1875, earning Pope Pius IX's strong approval. They stressed that the episcopacy as well as the papacy is of divine institution and that it was completely mistaken to think that Vatican I had absorbed episcopal jurisdiction into the papal or that the pope had now taken the place of every bishop (DS 3115). Clearly, an adequate account of these relationships would need something more than simply juridical language. Vatican I actually referred to the unity of the Church as one of 'communion' and expressly invoked one of the leading Western fathers, Pope Gregory the Great (590–604), to assert that papal power supports that of bishops (DS 3061). Its teaching needs careful interpretation in light of the tradition as a whole (Pottmeyer 1998; Kasper 2006).

With notable reference to Ignatius of Antioch and the *Apostolic Tradition*, Vatican II presented a highly sacramental understanding of bishops as high priests of their flocks and primary presiders at the Eucharist in their local churches (*SC* 41; *LG* 26), with the fullness of the sacrament of orders (*LG* 21), and added that bishops not only care for their own flocks, but also have a share in the care of the Church as a whole. In *LG* 22, after reasserting the teaching of Vatican I regarding the 'full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church' that the Bishop of Rome has as successor of Peter and 'pastor of the entire Church', Vatican II gave its famous teaching on 'episcopal collegiality':

> The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in their role as teachers and pastors, and in it the apostolic college is perpetuated. Together with their head, the Supreme Pontiff, and never apart from him, they have supreme and full authority over the universal Church
>
> (*LG* 22).

This teaching fundamentally differs from conciliarism in that the college of bishops is not properly constituted without its head, namely the pope, and cannot act without him (*LG*, Preliminary Explanatory Note, 3). Bishops 'take the place of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd and priest, and act as his representatives (*in eius persona*)' (*LG* 21). They are all 'vicars and legates of Christ' and not 'vicars of the Roman Pontiff' (*LG* 27). Configured as they are to Christ himself by their ordination, bishops are profoundly united with the pope and with one another in the very solicitude of Christ himself, which extends to the Church as a whole. This doctrine constitutes a significant resolution of the long-standing (p. 206) tension between episcopal and papal authority. Its practical implications, however, have as yet been little explored (see Ratzinger 1988: 46).

Ecclesiological Renewal

This more sacramental understanding of bishops was an integral part of a richer sacramental understanding of the Church itself, not just as a juridical institution but as a communion inwardly centred on Christ, which began to develop in the nineteenth century and flourished particularly in the twentieth century. The idea of the Church as a perfect society lacked this inwardness: 'Christ was seen essentially as the founder of this society rather than as its actual foundation' (Congar 1986a: 134).

Currents of renewal sprang up particularly thanks to the work of Johan Adam Möhler (1796–1838), 'the creator of ecclesiology as a field within systematic … theology' (Himes 2000: 56; see also Himes 1997). Möhler wrote two landmark texts, *Die Einheit in der Kirche* (*Unity in the Church*, 1825) and *Symbolik* (*Symbolism*, 1832). *Die Einheit* understood the Church organically and pneumatologically, i.e. in terms of the Holy Spirit: 'Because the Spirit fills her, the Church, the totality of believers that the Spirit forms, is the unconquerable treasure of the new life principle, ever renewing and rejuvenating herself, the uncreated source of nourishment for all' (quotation in Himes 2000: 56–57). *Symbolik* was more Christological:

> the visible Church … is the Son of God himself, everlastingly manifesting himself among men in a human form, perpetually renovated, and eternally young—the permanent incarnation of the same, as in Holy Writ, even the faithful are called 'the body of Christ'
>
> (quotation in Hahnenberg 2005: 8).

Symbolik had an immediate impact on Catholic theology in the mid-nineteenth century, especially via the Roman School of theologians: Giovanni Perrone (1794–1876), Carlo Passaglia (1812–87), Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816–86), and Clement Schrader (1820–75). *Die Einheit* did not have its real impact until the 1930s, when it was rediscovered and studied by Congar and others (Hahnenberg 2005: 17), and the seeds of an ecclesiology of communion were sown. Möhler influenced Henri De Lubac's *Catholicism* (1938), which systematically refuted an individualistic interpretation of Christianity and pioneered the idea of the Church as a sacrament: 'If Christ is the sacrament of God, the Church is for us the sacrament of Christ; … she really makes him present'; de Lubac 1988: 76; Dulles 2002: 55–67; McPartlan 2006: 14, 22, 60). At Vatican II *LG* 8 described the inner and outer aspects of the Church along similar lines, making a notable analogy between the Church and Christ himself, both human and divine.

The ecclesiological renewal of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be tracked by means of a series of images of the Church, which progressively came to prominence in succession to the idea of the perfect society, namely body of Christ, people of God, (p. 207) and communion (Weakland 2003; Hahnenberg 2005). Each of these images to an extent corrects its predecessor, but none is adequate in itself; all of them, perfect society included, convey something essential to a rounded understanding of the Church. One of the prime characteristics of Vatican II was its use of many images of the Church in *Lumen Gentium*, especially in chapters 1 and 2.

The draft text on the Church prepared (by Perrone and Schrader) for Vatican I, *Supremi Pastoris*, had an opening chapter on the Church as the mystical body of Christ, but this caused consternation among many of the bishops, who were used to the juridical idea of the perfect society under the pope. Given the challenges of the time, the idea of the mystical body seemed vague and distinctly unhelpful. There was indeed a tension between this idea and the pyramidal Church with which the bishops were familiar, because the idea of the mystical body naturally points to the Eucharist and to a Church structured as a communion of local eucharistic communities (Ratzinger 1988: 7, 14), a model that would not be embraced properly until Vatican II (the Church is a 'body of Churches', *corpus Ecclesiarum, LG* 23). In the end, a much reduced text, *Pastor aeternus*, dealing solely with the papacy, was promulgated, as mentioned earlier.

It was in Pope Pius XII's encyclical letter, *Mystici corporis* (1943) that the idea of the Church as the (mystical) body of Christ made its breakthrough. *Mystici* marked a significant embrace of biblical language for the Church, but tended simply to marry the idea of the (mystical) body with the pyramidal model of the Church under the pope ('Christ and His Vicar constitute only one Head', *Mystici* 38; see also McPartlan 2004a: 158), and so now seems like a transitional text. Moreover, while saying that there was no better name for the Church than 'the mystical body of Jesus Christ', *Mystici* stated that the true Church of Christ 'is [*est*] the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, *Roman* Church' (*Mystici* 13, emphasis added), which implied that those who were not Roman Catholics were not members of the body of Christ, and gave scant recognition to the status of other baptized Christians. This was an 'all or nothing' ecclesiology: those who were Roman Catholics en-

joyed the full reality of the Church and those who were not were in a perilous state vis-a-vis their salvation (*Mystici* 102). The idea of the Church as the body of Christ, his continuing incarnation, also risked overlooking the sins and failings of the Church (Ratzinger 1988: 16).

To counteract these weaknesses, the idea of the Church as the (pilgrim) people of God gained increasing popularity from around 1940. This notion emphasizes the continuity of the Church with the Old Testament people of Israel, and helpfully reminds the Church that it, too, is on a journey to the kingdom of God and is not yet at journey's end, not yet perfect. The people of God is made up of sinners who must regularly repent; it is in a covenant relationship with God and bears an eschatological hope on behalf of the world as a whole. However, just to call the Church the people of God would neglect the fundamental transformation introduced by the coming of Christ, so this idea, in turn, needs to be complemented by that of the body of Christ: the Church is the people of God as the body of Christ (Congar 1965: 14–16). So prominent was the idea of the people of God in the 1960s that while *LG* devoted a paragraph to the Church as the body of Christ (*LG* 7) it gave a whole chapter to the idea of the people of God (*LG* ch. 2, 9–17).

(p. 208) 'People of God' is capable of further misinterpretation, if the essential biblical reference 'of God' is neglected. The Church is not just a self-made people that can function democratically like any other (Ratzinger 1992: 441–442); it is a people called and chosen by God, for which he provides. This people bears the characteristics of God's own life; it is a *communion*, indeed 'a communion of life, love and truth' (*LG* 9). Established as such by Christ, the Church is used by him as 'the instrument for the salvation of all', salvation precisely being participation in the divine life of communion. Thus, the Church is 'the visible sacrament of this saving unity' (*LG* 9; see also 1, 48). Although the idea of communion is not specifically highlighted in *LG*, it underlies other images and runs throughout the text; in one form or another, the word appears no less than thirty-three times. With justification, therefore, the 1985 Synod stated: 'The ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea of the Council's documents' (Synod of Bishops 1985: II, C, 1).

The idea of the Church as communion is now uppermost not just in Catholic ecclesiology but in other Christian traditions and ecumenically also. A key question that arises is: what should a communion patterned on God's own Trinitarian life look like? This question is being pursued particularly in Catholic-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue, following the clear statement of principle in the first international Catholic-Orthodox agreed statement (1982): 'the church finds its model, its origin and its purpose in the mystery of God, one in three persons … The institutional elements should be nothing but a visible reflection of the reality of this mystery' (McPartlan 2009: 753–754; McPartlan 2016).

Vatican II and Ecumenism

The first draft, in 1962, of what eventually became *Lumen Gentium*, had eleven chapters, the first being 'The Nature of the Church Militant'. The 'Church militant' is that portion of the Church still making its pilgrim way on earth, the 'Church triumphant' being the saints

in heaven, while the ‘Church suffering’ consists of those who ‘have died and are being purified’ in purgatory (*LG* 49 and *CCC* 954). Thus the draft specifically focused only on the earthly portion of the Church, not the entirety of the Church, and it was roundly criticized for being too juridical and clerical, dominated by a pyramidal view. The text subsequently changed considerably in accordance with the wishes of the bishops (see Gil Hellín 1995: 1–619; Gaillardetz 2006: 8–26).

The second draft (1963) had just four chapters, the first now being ‘The Mystery of the Church’, much richer and more comprehensive than its predecessor. Already in place was the initial focus on Christ: *Lumen Gentium cum sit Christus* (Christ is the light of humanity) and the idea of the Church as ‘sacrament’ to transmit that light (see *LG* 1). The third draft (1964) made a momentous shift: the chapter on the hierarchy in which the relationship of the pope and the bishops was clarified, which had *preceded* the chapter on the people of God (in pyramidal fashion), now *followed* it, as chapter three, to indicate (p. 209) that the Church’s ministers are themselves first of all baptized members of the people of God who are called to serve their brothers and sisters. In a sense, the new ordering inverted the pyramid; certainly it conveyed a much more communional understanding of the Church. Nevertheless, a certain tension between communional/collaborative and pyramidal/juridical understandings of the Church remained in the final text and has continued since the council.

Lumen Gentium 23 affirms that it is in and from the local churches that the Catholic Church exists, a formula praised as signalling a return to the communion ecclesiology of the first millennium and opening the way for rapprochement between Catholics and Orthodox Christians (Kasper 1989: 157). However, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith stressed in 1992 that the complement is also true, the local churches exist in and from the universal Church (1992: n. 9), and debate continues about how best to describe the relationship between local and universal. The debate is further complicated by ambiguity over the precise meaning of the term, ‘universal Church’—does it mean the current worldwide Church or the heavenly Church at the end of time (see *LG* 2; McPartlan 2004b)?

The final version of *LG*, in eight chapters, was promulgated on 21 November 1964, on the same day, significantly, as the council’s Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (*UR*). This fact has relevance with regard to *LG* 8 in which the council famously teaches that the Church of Christ, which he committed to Peter and the apostles after his resurrection, ‘*subsists in* the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him’ (emphasis added). ‘Subsists in’ was a deliberate change from the original wording which, following Pope Pius XII, simply said that the Church of Christ ‘is [*est*]’ the Catholic Church. The change was made so as to harmonize with what is said in the sentence immediately following: ‘Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines’ (*LG* 8; Sullivan 1986: 116). ‘Is’ is exclusive and implies that there is nothing of the Church outside the Roman Catholic Church, whereas the council wanted to affirm ecumenically the presence of ‘ele-

ments' of the Church outside the visible bounds of the Catholic Church. Another expression had to be found, and *subsistit in* was chosen.

The idea of elements of the Church, pioneered by Congar (Congar 1939), is an alternative to the all-or-nothing view exemplified in *Mystici corporis*. According to this idea, many elements make up the Church—prayer, Scripture, sacraments (see *LG* 15; *UR* 3)—and to the extent that these are present in other Christian Churches and communities, the latter are to a greater or lesser degree in communion with the Catholic Church. There is thus a sliding scale, so to speak. In bilateral and multilateral ecumenical dialogues since Vatican II, the Catholic Church has sought to clarify which elements it holds in common with different ecumenical partners and to discuss problematic areas in the hope of increasing the measure of agreement and communion. 'Ecumenism is directed precisely to making the partial communion existing between Christians grow towards full communion in truth and charity' (*Ut unum sint* 14). 'Full unity will come about when all share in the fullness of the means of salvation entrusted by Christ to his Church' (*Ut unum* 86).

(p. 210) *UR* teaches that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained only through the Catholic Church, and emphasizes that Christ established a structure of unity in the Church to hold its members together (and, we might add, the elements also, which belong together; *LG* 8), namely the apostles with Peter as their head, whose successors today are the bishops with the pope at their head. Other Christians 'are not blessed with that unity' (*UR* 3). In a passage which complements and illuminates *LG* 8, *UR* 4 says that the unity Christ bestowed on his Church in the beginning '*subsists in* the Catholic Church' (emphasis added). In short, the full structure of unity that Christ established continues to exist in (i.e. subsists in) the Catholic Church, together with the fullness of the means of salvation, and so it can be said that the Church itself, founded by Christ, continues to exist in (subsists in) the Catholic Church. There is some debate as to whether *LG*'s 'subsists in' also has philosophical significance (Ratzinger 2005: 144–149).

It must immediately be added that, although the Catholic Church believes that it contains all the elements of the Church, it acknowledges that certain of these elements have at times been better appreciated and 'more effectively emphasized' in other churches and communities; that to the extent that the elements are found in other Christian communities 'the one Church of Christ is effectively present in them'; and that ecumenical dialogue is always a mutual enrichment, never just an exchange of ideas but always an 'exchange of gifts' (*Ut Unum sint* 14, 11, 28).

Conclusion

Ecumenical endeavours are inspired by the prayer of Jesus that his followers would be one 'so that the world may believe' (John 17:21; *UR* 2). They are essential for a Church that wants to evangelize, since Christian division 'openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature' (*UR* 1). Vatican II was profoundly committed to evangelization and undertook its extensive review of the Church in *LG* precisely so that the Church might better

serve and bear witness to Christ, the light of the world, *lumen gentium* (see *LG* 1). The bond between the Church and the world was itself carefully explored in the council's pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world, *Gaudium et Spes*, and the latter text is better understood not as an appendix but rather as a prolegomenon to *LG* (McPartlan 2008), setting the scene and describing the work for which the Church must be fit and ready.

In its constitution on the liturgy, the council taught that the source and summit of all the Church's activity is the liturgy (*SC* 10; see also *LG* 11), and in particular that the goal of evangelization is to gather people into the family of God by baptism so that they might praise God, 'take part in the Sacrifice and … eat the Lord's Supper' (*SC* 10). The theme of evangelization thus intimately links the council's key documents on the liturgy, the Church, and the Church in the modern world, a key indicator of which is the recurrence across all three texts of the idea of the Church as sacrament. The importance (p. 211) of this idea for *LG* has already been noted, but the constitution on the liturgy also refers to the Church as 'the sacrament of unity' (*SC* 26). *GS* memorably summarizes that the Church's 'one sole purpose' is that 'the kingdom of God may come and the salvation of the human race may be accomplished'. In that light, it says, every benefit that the Church can offer to the world relates to its being 'the universal sacrament of salvation', both manifesting and actualizing 'the mystery of God's love' (*GS* 45). Since that love originates in the communion of the Trinity and expresses itself in communion here on earth, once again we have the key idea that expresses the Catholic understanding of the Church: it is a sacrament of communion, 'the visible plan of God's love for humanity' (*CCC* 776).

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Our Lady and the Saints

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the nature and development of Mariology—the theology of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God—within the context of the Church understood as the communion of saints. The chapter begins by detailing the gradual unfolding of Marian theology and devotion in the Church from the New Testament until the sixteenth century. The development and proclamation of the dogmas of the immaculate conception and of the assumption are then studied. Treatment of Mary and the Church is followed by discussion of the theology of sainthood. The chapter ends with reference to Vatican II's emphasis on Mary's role within the Church.

Keywords: Mary, Mariology, Church, saints, assumption, immaculate conception, Vatican II, ecumenism

THROUGHOUT the centuries Christians have professed their constant belief in Jesus Christ's birth from the 'Virgin Mary' and in the Church as 'the communion of saints'. Consistent with this view, the celebrant of the Eucharist proclaims in the ancient liturgies just before communion '*Sancta Sanctis*!'—'God's holy gifts for God's holy people!'. The faithful (*sancti*) are nourished with the body and blood of Jesus Christ (the 'sacred things' or *sancta*), the eternal second person of the Blessed Trinity. St Nicetas, writing at the beginning of the fifth century in his *Explanation of the Creed* (*c*.AD 414) asks rhetorically: 'What is the Church if not the assembly of saints (*communio sanctorum*)?' (*Instr.* 10; Nicetas 1949: 49). Despite ancient usage, Christians have come to hesitate to call themselves saints and tend to reserve that appellation for their deceased members who permitted their lives to be truly transformed through the sacraments into 'other Christs'. St Paul expresses succinctly this highest form of human existence: 'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me' (Gal. 2:20). There is a living link uniting the exalted Lord with the Church of both the blessed in heaven (*sancti in patria*) and the baptized on earth (*sancti in via*) as the one mystical body of Christ. The Second Vatican Council underlines, at *Lumen Gentium* (*LG*) 3, that the Church forms this communion of Christ's charity in the strength of the Holy Spirit as the solidarity of all partakers, past and present, in the one eucharistic body of Christ.

As the Mother of God, Our Lady, Mary of Nazareth, occupies both an exalted and unifying position among the illustrious choir of saints and believers of all ages. Vatican II summarizes:

> The Virgin Mary … is acknowledged and honoured as being truly the Mother of God and of the redeemer … She is 'clearly the mother of the members of Christ' … since she has by her charity joined in bringing about the birth of believers in the Church, who are members of its head
>
> (*LG* 53).

(p. 215)

Mary, Mother of God, Mother of Believers

The Witness of Scripture

At first Scripture makes comparatively scant reference to Mary. Mark 3:20f., 31–5 as well as 6:1–6 mention Mary along with Jesus' relatives. In the first chapter of his gospel, Matthew briefly relates Mary's motherhood, emphasizing the Lord's supernatural birth through the Holy Spirit as fulfilling the prophecy announced in Isa. 7:14: 'Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel'. In the Greek Septuagint version of this Old Testament text—to which Matt. 1:23 refers—the Hebrew word for young woman and virgin, *Hā'almâ* is rendered παρθένος or 'virgin' in English. The evangelists take very little note of Joseph, thereby indirectly underlining the supernatural birth of Jesus. The earliest gospel stresses this fact by using a matronymic—its conspicuously uncommon description of Jesus as 'the son of Mary' (Mark 6:3), rather than as 'son of Joseph'. Mark and Matthew refer to Jesus' relatives without mentioning a father. These small details, laden with meaning, will serve later as the basis for her title as *Theotokos*—'Mother of God'. With the commonest of names for a woman at that time in the Holy Land, Mary becomes, paradoxically, the greatest woman in history.

Luke, however, offers a rich portrayal of Mary's role in salvation. The Annunciation and visitation are described in great detail. In a singular way Mary is filled with grace (Luke 1:28): as the immaculate virgin (Luke 1:27, 34), the Mother of the Messiah and of God (Luke 1:31–5), the bride of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), and the obedient 'handmaid' of the Lord (Luke 1:38). The one who believes (Luke 1:45) and listens (Luke 2:19.51; 11:28) in an exemplary fashion is the prophetess (Luke 1:48) who is exalted 'among all women' and 'all generations' (Luke 1:42, 48). While Elizabeth praises her faith (Luke 1:45), Mary herself credits God with all honours. The 'sword' piercing her heart prefigures the Lord's passion (Luke 2:34f). The hymnic *Magnificat* announces the veneration Christians will accord her henceforth (Luke 1:48). In fact, the phrase 'For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed' strongly suggests Mary being held in generally high esteem by Christians already from the time of the primitive Church.

In John's gospel, Mary is publicly present at the wedding of Cana (John 2:1–11). While not determining 'the Lord's hour,' she points to Jesus' activity 'Do whatever he tells you' (John 2:5). The Mother of the Lord encourages attentiveness and fidelity to her Son. The scene under the cross is of lasting and paradigmatic, ecclesiological significance. It is nothing less than a model community beneath the cross to which all Christians are invited. The dying Lord relates the disciple to 'his mother;' he relates Mary in return to John. In this scene these two historic figures are ecclesio-typical representatives. The 'beloved disciple' represents the believing Church, while Mary is this Church's mother. (p. 216) The disciple takes her into his own home (John 19:27), which henceforth defines the spiritual realm that will be known as the Church.

Acts 1:14 describes Mary as belonging to the very core of the original Jerusalem community. A correspondence between the hovering of the Holy Spirit over Mary at the Annunciation (Luke 1:35) and the equally unexpected descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost in Acts 2 is most significant. Thus, the Mother of God stands at the beginning of salvation history and at the centre of the Church. There is some debate whether the symbolic figure of 'the woman clothed with the sun' in Rev. 12:1 refers to Mary. However, there is consensus that it certainly also refers to the people of God in the Old and New Covenants as the original home of the Messiah. As the author identifies the Messiah with the Son of Man, it stands to reason to assume the 'woman' refers to Mary.

Thus, already the New Testament establishes a clear picture of Mary. A number of titles and brief phrases will become the seeds for later doctrinal formulations. Thus, her heroic faith will make her the mother of all believers (Luke 1:45—'blessed is she who believed'). She is praised among all women (Luke 1:42), both as a member of the Church (Acts 1:14) and as the Mother of the Church (John 19:26f). These determinations allow for such later titles as 'the new Eve', the 'Mother of the Believers', 'Mother of Church', and 'primordial Image of the Church'. In a sermon entitled 'On the fitness of the glories of Mary', John Henry Newman draws out an essential feature of Mariological development:

> You may recollect, my brethren, our Lord's words when on the day of His resurrection He had joined the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and found them sad and perplexed in consequence of His death. He said, '*Ought not* Christ to suffer these things, and so enter into His glory?' He appealed to the fitness and congruity which existed between this otherwise surprising event and the other truths which had been revealed concerning the Divine purpose of saving the world. … Elsewhere, speaking of prophesying, or the exposition of what is latent in Divine truth, [St Paul] bids his brethren exercise the gift 'according to the *analogy* or rule of faith'; that is, so that the doctrine preached may correspond and fit into what is already received. Thus, you see, it is a great evidence of truth, in the case of revealed teaching, that it is so consistent, that it so hangs together, that one thing springs out of another, that each part requires and is required by the rest.
>
> This great principle, which is exemplified so variously in the structure and history of Catholic doctrine … is brought before us especially at this season, when we are

> celebrating the Assumption of our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, into heaven. We receive it on the belief of ages; but, viewed in the light of reason, it is the *fitness* of this termination of her earthly course which so persuasively recommends it to our minds: we feel it 'ought' to be; that it 'becomes' her Lord and Son thus to provide for one who was so singular and special, both in herself and her relations to Him. We find that it is simply in harmony with the substance and main outlines of the doctrine of the Incarnation …
>
> (Newman 2002: 360–361).

From the seeds planted in Scripture, the Church has drawn forth what is fitting in order to present in its fullness the divine economy of salvation.

(p. 217) Developments in the Early Church

This section of the chapter traces the growth of Marian devotion and theological discussion in the first few centuries of the Church's life (for more extensive treatment of the authors considered here see Gambero 1999; Graef 1963: 32–161; Rubin 2009: 3–99). Throughout this period, reflection on Mary is integrally related to the Church's articulation of its Christological faith. Already, in the first decades of the second century, Ignatius of Antioch (*c.*35–107) speaks of Mary's 'virginity' (*Smyrn.* 1.1; see also *Trall.* 1.10), insisting also that Jesus Christ was 'of Mary and of God' (*Eph*. 7:1), thereby upholding the incarnation against any claim that Jesus was but an ordinary man. The redemption worked by Jesus Christ permits Justin the Martyr (*c.*AD 100–65) to call Mary 'the new Eve'. Using Isaiah's prophecy ('a virgin shall conceive …' Isa. 7:14) in his famous *Dialogue with Trypho* (*c.*AD 150), Justin demonstrates how only in Jesus' birth could that prophecy be fulfilled (*Dial.* 66). Jesus is no mere human or inspired prophet, but the one human being uniquely born by the will of God (*Dial.* 76). Irenaeus of Lyons (*c.*130–200) draws a parallel between the virgin soil from which Adam was formed and Mary herself (*Haer.* 3. 21.10); in so doing he shows the roots of the appellation of 'new Eve'. Looking ahead in this regard, Epiphanius (*c.*310–403) declared the title 'Mother of the Living' (Genesis 3:20) more fitting to Mary than to Eve, who had caused the death of herself and her offspring (*Pan.* 78.18). 140). This parallel would become a constant in later theology. In the nineteenth century, for example Newman's theology makes much of it, and Joseph Matthias Scheeben (1835–88) would develop a nuptial theology based on the Eve/Mary parallel (see Graef 1965: 106–127). Citing the Fathers, Vatican II (1962–5) reiterates this view in *Lumen Gentium* 56.

The compound noun *Theotokos* combines God (*Theos*) with birth (*tokos*), giving expression to the unique quality of the mystery of the Incarnation: the singularity of Jesus Christ as the God man/Son of God and son of a human mother. The term is used from the time of Origen (*c.*185–*c.*254), and is frequent in the great writers of the fourth century. All the Cappadocian Fathers use the same term, as do Athanasius (*c.*296–373) and Ambrose (*c.* 139–97). This title would be solemnly dogmatized in 431 at the Council of Ephesus. Rejecting Nestorius's technical term *Christotokos*, 'the mother of Christ in his humanity',

the council adopted Cyril of Alexandria's (444) position on Mary as Mother of God in order to emphasize that, because of the unity of divine and human in Christ's person, Mary could indeed be said to be the one who had borne God in her womb.

Significantly, the definition of Mary in 431 as *Theotokos* was then reinforced at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 in a way that further emphasizes the inseparable nature of Mary's status and that of Christ as the Incarnate Word:

> If any one does not confess that the Emmanuel is truly God and therefore, that the holy Virgin is the Mother of God (*theotokos*) (since she begot according to the flesh the Word of God made flesh) *anathema sit*
>
> (Tanner 1990: 1. 84; DH 252).

(p. 218) Concerning this proclamation John Paul II (1920–2005) would write:

> … the dogma of the divine motherhood of Mary was for the Council of Ephesus and is for the Church like a seal upon the dogma of the Incarnation, in which the Word truly assumes human nature into the unity of his person, without cancelling out that nature.
>
> (*Redemptoris Mater* 4)

On the bases of Scripture and the early creeds, the Second Council of Constantinople (553) further deepened the Church's understanding by definitively declaring Mary's perpetual virginity (*DH* 422). Already around the year 200 Clement of Alexandria had asserted Mary's virginity after childbirth (*str*. 7.16.93), and he was followed in this language by Origen (*Comm. Mt.* 10.17). This language is also seen in a number of fourth-century authors. In the West, Ambrose vigorously defended the teaching of Mary's perpetual virginity (*Inst.* 35–62). He considers the Old Testament image of 'the shut gate' (Ezek. 44:2) a confirmation of what by then had become a virtual article of faith. Both the Lateran Council of 649 (DH 503) and the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 (DH 601) solemnly reiterated this teaching.

On the grounds of her election, Mary is also called 'type of the Church', 'intercessor', and 'sister of fellow Christians'. Andrew of Crete (*c*.660–740) describes her as '*mediatrix* of the law and grace … she is the mediation between the sublimity of God and the abjection of the flesh' (*Nativ. Mar.* I and IV, quoted at Gambero 1991: 398). The great Athanasius (*c*. 296–373) had already called her 'sister in faith' and Augustine refers to her as follows:

> So that woman, and she alone, was both a mother and a virgin, not only spiritually but also physically. She is not spiritually the mother of our head, as that is the Saviour himself. On the contrary, she was born spiritually from him, as everyone who believes in him, including her, is rightly called a child of the bridegroom. On the other hand, clearly she is the mother of his members, which is ourselves, since she has cooperated with charity for the birth of the faithful in the Church. They are the members of that head, but she is physically the mother of the head himself. So

> it was fitting that by a unique miracle our head was born physically from a virgin, to signify that his members would be born spiritually from the virgin Church. Only Mary, then, is mother and virgin both spiritually and physically, both Christ's mother and Christ's virgin.
>
> (*Virg*. 6; Augustine 1999: 70–71).

The same relationship between Mary and the Church is to be seen in Christian art from this period. In keeping with Acts 2, mosaics in the Roman church Sancta Sabina depict her as the personification of the Church. Decorated as an imperial person, she, as *Theotokos,* is proof of the Incarnation and thus the prototype for the Church.

(p. 219) Medieval Developments

During the Middle Ages reflection on the person and role of Mary in salvation history was an integral part of a deepening reflection on Christ himself (on the medieval period see Gambero 2005; Graef 1963: 162–351). Reiterating the position of the Second Council of Nicaea (787), Albert the Great (*c*.1280) and fellow Dominican Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) do not tire of emphasizing that Mary is worthy of veneration (*dulia*) like all the saints and even high veneration (*hyperdulia*). Adoration, however, is reserved for God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit alone (Thomas Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 84–5; III, q. 25, a. 5; see also Bonaventure, *In Sent*. III. D 9, q. 3). Therefore, one must distinguish between 'divine worship' (*cultus Divinus*) and 'Marian devotion' (*cultus Marialis*). The Eucharist is offered to God alone, but also in honour of the saints, as early as Augustine, who introduced the classical distinction between the worship due to God alone and the honour rendered to the saints (*Civ.* 10.1).

The ascendance of cities in the early Middle Ages gave rise to a class of wealthy burghers and numerous fraternities who promoted depictions of Mary seated on a throne. She was designated as 'Seat of Wisdom' (*Sedes Sapientiae*) and 'Queen of Heaven'. This understanding begins during the rule of the 'Ottonian' emperors of the Holy Roman Empire (919–1024) and reaches a climax in the *Maestà* style of Marian image in which Mary sits enthroned, surrounded by a court of angels and saints. The most famous is an altarpiece produced in Siena in 1307 by Duccio di Buoninsegna.

Gradually a new, personal intimacy between the mother and her divine Son came to be represented in art and present in theological and spiritual reflection. This new style displaces the solemn golden background and the predominantly hieratic representations of Mary characteristic of Byzantine art. This new perspective found both artistic and written expression during the *devotio moderna* (*c*.1380–1450). Artistically, depictions of Mary at this time often invite the viewer to enter into the life of Christ interiorly along with Mary.

Two Modern Marian Definitions

This history of devotion and theological reflection, and the well-established Feast of the Immaculate Conception all contributed symphonically to the definition of Mary's Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in 1854 in the bull *Ineffabilis Deus*:

> the most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and in view of the merits of Christ Jesus … preserved immune from all stain of original sin …
>
> (DH 2803. On this definition see O'Connor 2016).

(p. 220) It will be helpful to trace a little of the history of this theological concept (see Graef 1965 68ff; O'Connor 2016; Gambero 1999). In the second century, the apocryphal text known as the 'Proto-evangelium of James' had portrayed Mary as completely holy, thus implying the dogma of 1854. Many Patristic writers witness to a similar vision of Mary's life-long perfection. From John of Damascus (676–749) we have a sermon on the nativity of Mary that virtually teaches the doctrine, although within the context of a rather different doctrine of sin than that prevalent in the Latin world (see Graef 1963: 153ff; Gambero 1999: 400ff). In the West, Eadmer of Canterbury (*c.*1060–*c.*1126) produced the first detailed exposition of the doctrine (Graef 1963: 215–221).

In the centuries-long debate which ensued, the work of the Franciscan John Duns Scotus (*c.*1265–1308) was eventually crucial (Graef 1963: 298–302). The redemption achieved by Jesus preserved his Mother from the consequences of original sin from the very beginning of her life. She was pre-chosen by God and pre-redeemed by Jesus Christ. A little later, the Council of Basle (1431–49) was on the verge of dogmatizing the immaculate conception of Our Lady. In a non-binding session it declared the Immaculate Conception 'a pious doctrine' grounded in Scripture, liturgy, and faith. In 1546 the Council of Trent expressly excludes Mary from original sin and its effects in its decree on the same (DH 1516). From this point on, while debate continued, the doctrine gradually became the persistent teaching of the religious orders and after a complex process of consultation Pius IX acted. The doctrine represents, once again, an example of the Church drawing out of Scripture that which is fitting in order to better explain the divine economy of redemption in Christ. As Newman wrote:

> If Eve was raised above human nature by that indwelling moral gift which we call grace, is it rash to say that Mary had an even greater grace? … And if Eve had this supernatural inward gift given her from the first moment of her personal existence, is it possible to deny that Mary too had this gift from the very first moment of her personal existence? … Well, this is simply and literally the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception … and it really does seem to me bound up in the doctrine of the Fathers, that Mary is the Second Eve …
>
> (Newman 1900: 45–47, also quoted in Graef 1965: 111–112).

Mary’s Assumption into Heaven

In 1950 Mary’s assumption into heaven as a complete human being, body and soul, was solemnly proclaimed by Pope Pius XII in the bull *Munificentissimus Deus.* The definition draws attention throughout to the fittingness of Mary being exempt from the normal post-lapsarian character of human death (see Levering 2014 for a full exposition). The long celebration of the feast of the Dormition or Assumption is also mentioned, alongside the persistent testimony of many Patristic and medieval writers. For example, (p. 221) the text draws attention to the writing of Germanus of Constantinople (*c.*634–740): St Germanus considered the fact that the body of Mary, the virgin Mother of God, was incorrupt and had been taken up into heaven to be in keeping, not only with her divine motherhood, but also with the special holiness of her virginal body.

> You are she who, as it is written, appears in beauty, and your virginal body is all holy, all chaste, entirely the dwelling place of God, so that it is henceforth completely exempt from dissolution into dust. Though still human, it is changed into the heavenly life of incorruptibility, truly living and glorious, undamaged and sharing in perfect life.
>
> (*Munifenticissimus Deus* 22)

The bull also presents the definition as now the natural consequence of Mary’s immaculate conception:

> Christ overcame sin and death by his own death, and one who through Baptism has been born again in a supernatural way has conquered sin and death through the same Christ. Yet, according to the general rule, God does not will to grant to the just the full effect of the victory over death until the end of time has come. And so it is that the bodies of even the just are corrupted after death, and only on the last day will they be joined, each to its own glorious soul.
>
> Now God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule. She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.
>
> (*Munificentissimus Deus* 4–5)

And thus, exempt from this general rule, ‘the Immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever Virgin, when the course of her earthly life was ended, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven’ (*Munificentissimus Deus* 44; DH 3903).

Mary and the Church

Origen treats the subject of Mary as the ‘mother of the living’ on the basis of John’s gospel (John 1:4–23). If Christ lives in the believer (Gal. 2:20), then he must be the son of Mary. Mary is equally the representative of the Church and the spiritual mother of all Christians for Ambrose (*Instit.* 89; 98). Following him, Augustine teaches the Church to be also virgin and mother (*Virg.* 2.2, 6.6). Quoting John 19:26ff., Leo XIII discusses Mary’s spiritual maternity in great detail (DH 3262; 3275). Vatican II in *Lumen Gentium* 53 and 63–5 affirms this insight. Paul VI proclaimed Mary as *Mater Ecclesiae* (‘Mother of the Church’) in 1964. She is the ‘exemplary realization’ (*typos*) of the Church (*LG* 53 and 63).

(p. 222) Bernard of Clairvaux calls her ‘mediatrix of salvation’ (*Ep. ad Fr. Monte Dei* XIII). Stressing Christ as the sole mediator and the Mother of God’s subordinate role, in his encyclical *Fidentem piumque*, Leo XIII describes Mary as ‘the mediatrix alongside the mediator’ (DH 3321). While Jesus is defined since medieval times as the independent mediator (*mediator redemptionis*), Mary as creature exercises a dispositive or serving mediatorship alongside him (*mediatio dispositive et ministerialiter*). Her mediating role is always perceived as one completely dependent on the sole Redeemer. Only in passing does Vatican II mention her mediation, at *Lumen Gentium* 62. It takes care to note that this term ‘neither takes away anything from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one mediator’. And yet, the same document in 52–69 highlights Mary’s collaborative role in humankind’s redemption. John Paul II in *Redemptoris Mater* (38–41) refers to her ‘maternal mediation’. As intercessor, the Mother of God plays a ‘participant and subordinate’ role. The title *Coredemptrix* (co-redeemer) emerged in the sixteenth century and is found in one of Leo XIII’s pronouncements.

The great value of Mariology is that it helps one to better appreciate the mystery of Christ, the nature of the Church, and the great potential residing within human nature. Mary deserves veneration as she freely assented to becoming the Mother of the Redeemer (Luke 1:38). The figure of Mary enables Christians to apprehend God as the exclusive origin of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit caused Christ’s earthly existence. Mary stands for personal, humble, and serving love every Christian is called to imitate and for the indelible purity of the Church. Surveying conciliar and dogmatic definitions on Mary, one discovers that Church teachings are organic outgrowths under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of what is already contained *in nuce* in Scripture, the Church Fathers, liturgical feasts, the faith of saints, and that of the faithful. The Marian dogmatic definitions are, in the final analysis, grace-filled, crystallizing moments in Church history that liberate Christians ever again to the generosity of God.

Saints, Venerated and Exemplars of Meaningful Life

In the Old Testament the term qadōš/ʹάγιος/holy is rooted in God's sovereignty (Num. 16:5–7; Prov. 9:10; 30:3; Isa. 40:25; Hab. 1:12; 3:3; Hos. 12:1). This fact, however, does not restrict human beings from becoming holy and receiving veneration as well. The Jewish veneration of saints is little and only indirectly documented. One *locus classicus* is the death of Eleazar (2 Mac. 6:18–7:42); another is a mother's torture and execution along with her seven sons (Mac. 5:1–6:30). Shortly after the destruction of the Temple (AD 70) a synagogue is built over their graves, thus attesting to a Jewish cult of saints. The deceased patriarchs and prophets make intercessions (2 Mac. 1:12ff). The souls of the departed surround God's throne in heaven (4 Mac. 18:23).

(p. 223) 'You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy' (Lev. 19:2). The living God sanctifies his covenantal people (Heb. 13:12ff) living in a holy Church (1 Pet. 2:9f) through his Son Jesus of Nazareth, who is 'God's holy one' (Mark 1:24). As the servant of God (Acts 4:27) and innocent high priest (Heb. 7:26ff), Jesus Christ effects the holiness of others through his crucifixion (Eph. 5:2–6; cf. John 17:9; Heb. 9:15–28; 1 John 2:1f). The sacraments of initiation, especially the Eucharist, lead one to a virtuous life that strives to be close to that of the risen Lord (Rom. 6:3–11; Col. 2:12). In the Greek language of the New Testament, Christians referred to each other as 'saints' (Rom. 1:7; 2 Cor. 13:12), the term being taken to indicate those who imitate Christ. As Acts 6:9 relates, the 'saints' receive a privileged place in heaven. This notion is further elaborated in the second century when Christians introduce the foundational distinction between the cult of God (λατρεία, *latreia*, worship or adoration) and the cult of the saints (προσκύνησις, *proskynesis*, veneration).

The history of venerating Christian saints begins with Polycarp of Smyrna's martyrdom recorded around AD 160. His relics are considered 'more valuable than precious gems and gold'. The local community of Christians joyfully gathers at the martyr's grave in order to commemorate his heroic death and that of eleven additional martyrs in order to prepare fellow Christians to follow their example (*MPol*. 18,2f). While perhaps modelled after the pagan cult of a meal for the dead, it is no longer the family or friends of the deceased who meet at his grave, but Christians joined not by natural bonds but by the Eucharist. Martyrdom is considered a Christian life's perfection in the Triune God. The martyr mastered the spiritual combat (Eph. 6:10–17). He joins the choir of the just in heaven. As in the Old Testament, the saints are considered intercessors as they now enjoy freedom of speech vis-à-vis God, a relationship which showers blessings upon the living.

Gradually ascetic men and women also came to be venerated as martyrs (see Brown 2014). Their commemorations call to mind their virtuous lives as worthy of imitation and are occasions to invoke their assistance. As patrons or advocates these in celestial perfection intercede for those members of the Church still in a state of pilgrimage on earth. The inscription 'Paul and Peter pray for Nativus in eternity' is found on a graffito in the San

Sebastiano in Rome and bears the date 9 August 260. By their irreproachable life holy men and women approximate the paradisiacal condition prior to the Fall. By pursuing a virtuous life, praying, and doing penance they push back the power of evil. Athanasius's *Vita Antonii*, the biography of the Egyptian monk St Anthony (*c*.356), describes typologically the role of a saint in overcoming evil.

Ambrose and Augustine oppose celebrations at the saints' graves, opting instead for the annual commemoration of their *dies natalis* (birthday in heaven, day of martyrdom) during the Eucharist. In his eulogy for his deceased brother Basil of Caesarea (*c*.379), Gregory of Nyssa emphasizes that no commemoration of a saint, such as 'Stephen, Peter, James, John, Paul', can compare with the holiest of feasts, the Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour, Christmas. Transformed by the Eucharist into other 'Christs,' the saints' remains are removed from graves (*elevatio*) and brought (*translatio*) into churches. This is mentioned in the case of the Roman martyrs Cyprian of Carthage, Felicity, and Perpetua (p. 224) in 354. Such translation was considered an official canonization until Rome began handling canonizations. Their relics are often deposed in altars. This deposition signifies a real eucharistic connection between the saints and the faithful still on pilgrimage to heaven. Christ's grace sanctifies and 'symphonically' unites all the members of the Church. This is expressed in the veneration of saints—which in turn evokes emulation on the part of the faithful. There exists an interpersonal, ecclesial bond between the individual believer and the saints in heaven.

Consonant with this eucharistic understanding which unites living Christians with the deceased and the saints, canon 46 of the Synod of Carthage (419) permits the liturgical reading of the passion of martyrs at their annual commemorations. Indeed, since the Second Council of Nicaea (787) no church may be consecrated without containing relics of saints. Ever since, a silken cloth (*antiminsion*) containing such relics that were blessed by a bishop, is placed on the altar in the East. The celebration of saints is delocalized from their respective native regions around this time. In Rome and in the Carolingian Empire a general calendar evolves. Probably it was Alcuin (740–804) who introduced the feast of All Saints, which had originated in Ireland. In the twelfth century, canonizations become exclusively a papal prerogative.

The personal communion of the individual with God is unthinkable without a mutual participation in the joys and travails of other Christians. All Christians—past and present—collectively edify the body of Christ (Rom. 12:4; 1 Cor. 12:7.26f; Eph. 4:16; Col. 3:14). The one mediator Christ (Rom. 8:3; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:1) as the High Priest interceding on our behalf (Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 10:19), enables lived solidarity among Christians. Charity amongst Christians on earth becomes possible in the sacramentally shared community with Christ and the saints (Rom. 14:7ff; 1 Thess. 4:13–17). Therefore, the Church is far more than a reality definable by horizontal, sociological terms; it is the unity of the one, celestial, and earthly people of God (Rev. 5:9; 6:9; 8:3; Heb. 12:22ff). Mindful of this sacramental 'corporate identity', prominent figures from the Old Testament are included among the holy apostles and prophets of the early Church (Eph. 3:5), martyrs (Rev. 6:9) and masters of Christian spirituality. As 2 Mac. 15:12–16 supports, one trusts their inter-

cessory powers to invoke the 'judge of the world' (see Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4). This evidence does not imply Mary and saints as 'courts of appeal' that might mitigate an otherwise harsher divine verdict. On the contrary, the *communio*-structure as 'head and body—the one whole Christ' as Augustine posits, is the very condition for the possibility of intercession being made at all.

Upon this background, the Council of Trent does not so much argue against the grievances of Reformers as restate the faith of the Early Church. In its 1563 decree 'On Invocation, Veneration and Relics of the Saints' we find: 'it is good and useful to invoke them (the saints in heaven) humbly and to have recourse to their prayers … in order to obtain favours *from God through his Son*, our Lord Jesus Christ, who *alone* is our Redeemer and Saviour' (DH 1821; italics added, Tanner 1990: 2, 774–775). The subsequent passages expressly reject any kind of idolatry of saints (DH 1821–25). (p. 225) Far from being magical, the saints, their relics, and their images point to the Christ mystery. The *Roman Breviary* (1568) and *Roman Missal* (1570) contain a universal calendar of saints for the first time. The calendar had been pruned and the process of canonization entrusted to the Congregation of the Rites (1588). Known as Bollandists, Belgian Jesuits pioneered scholarly research into saints and their cult.

Ecumenical Considerations Sharpen the Profile of Saints

The Lutheran 'Augsburg Confession' of 1530 does acknowledge saints enjoying a threefold honour: giving thanks to God, strengthening faith, and imitating their virtues. Calvin rejects outright the cult of saints but holds fast to them as 'the host of the elect' (*Institutes* I, 12, 2). In agreement with Catholic teaching, Reformers attach great importance to saints for strengthening faith and as *exempla* for a good Christian life. The communion of Mary and the saints with the terrestrial church is a familiar notion. The Reformers affirm Mary's divine motherhood and purity, while not accepting what will become the dogmas of 1854 and 1950. As Christ is the sole redeemer, invoking saints is considered an idolatrous abuse.

In contrast, Catholic and Orthodox theology perceive Mary and the saints as describing the new creation in Christ, as members of ecclesial and anthropological realities partaking in the Chalcedonian hypostatic union of divine and human natures in the one divine person Jesus Christ. As the head of His Church, Christ enables interaction among her members. The activities of Mary, the saints, and all Christians give expression to grace originating in the Blessed Trinity. Not merely forensically justifying, grace is a transformative divine self-communication, restoring human sociability vertically (between God and humankind) and horizontally (among fellow human beings). Based on such a Christocentric understanding, the ecclesial and social dimensions of the veneration of Mary and the saints are portrayed in *Lumen gentium* 7 and 8. Mary and the saints freely receive divine grace. In Christ, Christians do not passively expect and accept grace, but are transformed by grace and become 'collaborators' (disciples as 'friends of Christ') in grace. The

utter sovereignty of God is preserved, but God's transcendence is no longer a barrier in Jesus Christ. Free human response to God's initiative is demonstrated unsurpassably by Mary's *fiat* and her standing under the cross: discipleship means transformation into Christ (Luke 2:33; John 19:25–7). Mary is *the* fulcrum of redeemed humanity. The ancient axiom Ambrose taught holds true: the more holy and graced a human being becomes, the more he is oriented towards communion with the Triune God and with human beings (*Virg*. 1.9.51). The intercessory roles of Mary and of the saints become intelligible. In her and the choir of saints' prayers the utterly and unquantifiable free glory of God becomes yet more luminous. The sainthood of human beings honours its origin: divine glory.

(p. 226) Vatican II

The doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity is of great importance for all believers as it signifies the definitive beginning of the new creation. Here complete openness to God's will underlines that active welcoming of salvation on the part of the believers is required. Saints attempt to imitate this in a fashion meriting emulation. Those called to celibate lifestyles, such as priests, members of religious orders, and virgins, live in such a way as to praise the Triune God, bless all believers, and contribute to the Kingdom of God on earth. Mary is far more than a mere medium of the incarnation. Her perfect sinlessness functions typologically for the holiness of the Church, and all Christians are called to imitate her (*LG* 65. On the state of Mariology immediately prior to the Council see Cavadini and Peters 2017). Glorified with the saints in heaven, Mary points to what the whole Church will effect—union with God and renewal of the world. Sacramental communion of all believers impels the pilgrim Church on earth towards union with the heavenly Church: Mary, the beatified, and the saints (*Lumen gentium* 49f).

Mary's response to Gabriel's words is illustrative of faith. Mary appears not to grasp the significance of the Archangel's words and yet trusts 'the greater possibilities of God' (Benedict XVI). Such is her poignant testimony to the radical nature of discipleship. Mary is 'the most sublime fruit of redemption' (*SC* 103). On these grounds Vatican II integrates Mary and the saints into the overarching *communio*-reality of all the faithful throughout time and space as one body oriented in both the here and now and in heaven towards the Blessed Trinity. The Easter Mystery, Jesus Christ, is the crucial link between the two realms (*SC* 104). There exists on the part of the people of God a forward movement towards *communio* with the Triune God (see *LG* 48–69). In this life-giving tension a) between the individual believer and the faithful on earth, and b) between heaven and earth, an original, creative, and personal form of Christian discipleship acquires contours and builds up the entire Church as one sacramental community (1 Cor. 12:7).

The intercessory prayers of Mary and the saints do not add to the saving works of Christ. Rather, Mary and the saints are witnesses to the action of grace transforming human nature back to its original end. Venerating them aims at God's glory (John 12:26). The difference between and unity of Jesus and the saints is significant. Christ is the origin and head of salvation. Without their head, the members of His body effect nothing. Yet, as its mem-

bers they continue the works eloquently described in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (see John 14:12). In the third and fourth centuries the Church Fathers had argued against the accusations of Celsus, the Emperor Julian the Apostate, and Maximus of Madaura that in saints Christians continue the pagan worship of deities. Those pagan authors failed to grasp that the saints are not being adored, but rather loved as friends of Christ and as our brothers and sisters. The ontologically insurmountable difference between creator and creature allows a relationship to develop without it reaching equality, let alone identity. And thus, the veneration due to the saints does not compete with, but amplifies the adoration owed to God alone.

(p. 227) In a lasting and definitive way Mary belongs to God and therefore is completely holy. Confronted with this marvel, at a certain point Christians cease to rationalize and begin to praise the one and Triune God—as the saints did on earth and now continue to do in heaven. The faithful are confident that Mary and the saints reside in heaven bringing their historical discipleship into the eschatological presence of an 'in Christ' (1 Thess. 4:16), thereby fulfilling Paul's words 'What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable' (1 Cor. 15:42). Upon this rich theological canvas, the consonance of faith in the incarnation of God with the faith in the resurrection is illustrated.

Suggested Reading

On the subjects of this chapter see also *CCC* 946-975, 487-511, 773, 2030.

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Eschatology

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the Christian doctrine of the end of all things and the character of our hope about that end. The chapter begins with an introduction to the 'Parousia', the coming of Christ at the end of time. It then considers the resurrection of the dead, the renewal of the cosmos—the establishment of the new heavens and new earth—and the final judgement. A consideration of heaven is matched by discussion of how Christians should imagine scriptural teaching on perpetual retribution. The chapter then considers how Christian eschatological doctrine shapes our experience in the world. The chapter closes with a treatment of purgatory and the space between death and resurrection.

Keywords: eschatology, Parousia, resurrection, judgement, death, heaven, purgatory, hell, creation.

Immortality and the Truth of Christian Hope

THE molecular biologist John J. Medina once stated that 'the brain is not interested in reality; it is interested in survival' (Medina 2008: 54). Humans are vitally interested in living forever. If there is nothing beyond death, if there is no such thing as immortality, there is no hope, literally there is no future. Throughout Scripture, God is said to promise a glorious, immortal future to those who believe in him. Christ, through his life, death, and resurrection, has actuated this promise definitively. The cause of Christianity, and in a sense the cause of humanity, stands or falls on the truthfulness or otherwise of this pledge.

The term 'eschatology' derives from the Greek *eschaton*, 'what comes last'. Eschatology is a sub-discipline within Christian theology that studies in what the divine promise actually consists. Firstly, eschatology involves the question of the correct interpretation of affirmations concerning the afterlife. The appropriate hermeneutical key to eschatology is hope, Christian hope, the power God infuses into believers by which they direct their whole being to the future promise of salvation (Pieper 1994; O'Callaghan 2011: 3–38). In the second place, inseparably, eschatology deals with the truth of eschatological statements, which refer to realities with which we have little direct contact, for 'no eye has seen, nor

ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him' (1 Cor. 2:9). Truth, though deriving from God, must be knowable by humans as they are. A purely verbal promise, no matter how elevated its claims may be, could not serve as a basis for responsible, serene, and committed Christian faith/hope unless it rings true with the very being of the listener. The human spirit should resonate deeply with the revealed word of promise. This question of truth may be considered in two ways.

(p. 230) First, philosophers (principally Plato and Aquinas) have managed with greater or lesser success to show that human interiority (or the 'soul') is spiritual and therefore incorruptible (O'Callaghan 2005). To accept the divine promise of eternal life may involve a risk, a risk of faith and hope, but it is a reasonable risk. As Plato says speaking of the immortality of the soul, 'it is a beautiful risk to take' (*Phaedo*, 63a). Second, as we shall see through the course of this chapter, the Christian promise of eschatological salvation not only accounts for the immortality of the individual self, but also, and inseparably, for the immortality of the life one has lived on earth, in all its corporal, social and temporal qualities.

Parousia: the Future Coming of the Lord Jesus in Glory

The Apostles' Creed proclaims that the risen Christ 'will return to judge the living and the dead'. The future coming of Christ in glory is usually called the Parousia (O'Callaghan 2011: 39–73; O'Callaghan 2017). The term refers to a definitive living presence, and is frequently used in the New Testament in connection with Christ's final coming (Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; Acts 7:52; 13:24; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1,8 , 9; Jas. 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4, 12). It is not, of course, that the risen Christ is not present in the 'now' of the Church, saving humans and vivifying God's kingdom on earth through word and sacrament. But at the end of time this presence will become definitive, public, universal, and incontrovertible.

But will the Parousia really take place in the future? Several reasons seem to militate against it. First, the fact that the prospect of the coming of Jesus in glory to judge the living and the dead seems to provide anything but comfort, inspiration, or hope for believers. Jesus after all came to save humans, not to condemn them (John 12:47), whereas the promise of the Parousia occasions fear and dread. *Dies irae, dies illae*, the medieval hymn sang, a 'day of wrath, that day', *dies magna et amara valde*, 'a day of wonder and spectacle, though bitter to the core' (see Zeph. 1:14–18). And 'he who fears', observes John, 'is not perfected in love' (1 John 4:18). Nevertheless, the Parousia was considered from the earliest times as a motive of joy for Christians and the principal object of their hope (Luke 21:28; Titus 2:12–14; Philem. 3:20; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:17–20). The Eucharist is celebrated in the Church, Paul tells us, 'until Christ comes' (1 Cor. 11:26) in glory. The *anamnesis* (or memory prayer) within the Eucharistic celebration refers not only to the past (Christ's passion, death, and resurrection), or to the present (the life of the Church), but also to the future coming, in such a way that believers are '… ready to greet him

when he comes again' (*III Eucharistic Prayer*). Something of a kind may be said of other sacraments: Baptism, Penance, etc.

A second difficulty regarding the end of time stems from the conviction of Hegel and others that the process of cosmic and human perfection will take place within the world (p. 231) as we know it. There is no need to speak of a transcendent consummation of the world beyond time and death. The Parousia would be superfluous. However, the problem of Hegel's this-worldly eschatology is that cosmic perfection is obtained only at the expense of the individual's immortality: humanity matures but individuals disappear. This is hardly in keeping with Scripture.

Third, acceptance of the Parousia has been put under strain in recent centuries at a scientific level by our awareness of the vastness of the universe and the intractable quality of the laws governing physical matter. Can the Resurrection of one man, Jesus Christ, realistically be extended to the whole of the universe, bringing about the resurrection, judgement, and glorification of the whole of creation? At best, the term 'end of time' would be applicable to death and the subsequent salvation of the individual human spirit, not affecting the material universe or the human body. However, on the scientific front things have changed considerably of late, as Newtonian understandings of the physical universe, impervious to the spirit, were gradually discarded, and as physicists became more and more convinced that the universe may no longer be considered a fixed indefinitely extended space, but rather a process of expansion and growth (Dyson 1979; Barrow and Tipler 1987; Tipler 1994).

In the fourth place, the principal challenge to the doctrine of Parousia comes from biblical quarters. Two views may be mentioned (O'Callaghan 2004, 19–60). According to the 'thoroughgoing eschatology' school—which included such figures as Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) and Johannes Weiss (1863–1914)—Jesus expected the imminent coming of the kingdom, perhaps within his own lifetime, and instructed his followers in this high-pressured context. Seeing that the Parousia did not take place there and then, Christians put off the event for a future moment and adjusted Jesus' teaching to suit. Other authors explain the New Testament in terms of a 'realized eschatology': the kingdom of God is already fully present among believers in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ (C. H. Dodd [1884–1973]). Even should there be an 'end of time', it will be of no theological relevance. Faith in Christ is entirely focused on the present moment of conversion (Rudolf Bultmann [1884–1976]). In sum, both thoroughgoing and realized eschatologies deny either the fact or the relevance of the Parousia.

Although many New Testament texts seem to indicate Jesus expected the imminent coming of the Kingdom (e.g. Matt. 10:23; 16:28; 24:34, and parallels), it is clear that Christians, though understandably desirous to gaze upon their beloved saviour again, and convinced the world would soon come to an end, suffered no substantial crisis but lived with naturalness in the delay of Parousia. Since Christ founded a Church and sent his disciples to evangelize the world (Matt. 28:20), there had to be an extended time for this to take place. Besides, many Synoptic parables of growth and waiting indicate that the consolida-

tion of the Kingdom will be a drawn-out affair (Matt. 13:24–33; 24:45–51; 25:1–13; 14–30, and parallels). Many Fathers of the Church and theologians refer 'end time' texts not only to the Parousia but to other critical moments in the saving work of Christ: the Transfiguration, the death and resurrection of Jesus, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the consolidation of Christian mission, the celebration of the Eucharist, and so on.

(p. 232) Summing up, we can say that the doctrine of the Parousia is essential to the New Testament and Christian teaching, that it is not only compatible with anthropology, philosophy, and science, but serves as a stimulus for all three.

The Resurrection of the Dead

When the risen, glorious Christ comes at the end of time, the first effect of his coming will be the communication of his glory and fullness of life to the created world, specifically to human beings. What happened during the Easter mystery will be applied to all humans: the dead will rise up and live forever with an immortal, glorious humanity (Levenson 2006; O'Callaghan 2011: 74–114).

The promise of resurrection is present in the Old Testament in three ways. First, resurrection is always the result of God's power and intervention: God is the God of the living, the one who gives life, life eternal. Resurrection is not a natural process, as reincarnation is. Something human lives on in the underworld (*sheol*) after death, the *refa'im*, or languid human shadows. What God will raise up from *sheol* is precisely the *refa'im*. Second, a clear continuity may be detected between the doctrine of creation and that of resurrection. Several Old Testament resurrection texts serve as glosses to the creation accounts of Gen. 1–3. Third, the context in which the doctrine of resurrection consolidates is the human search for justice. The pious believer experiences the bitterness of disgrace and tragedy, as he observes the triumph of the unjust (Ps. 16; 49; 73), and is tempted to fall into the triple spiral of rebellion and blasphemy, then violent remonstrance, and finally idolatry. He is convinced that either justice is obtained on earth, or it will never be established. This is where the promise of resurrection arises, first of all in the context of the promise that Israel will rise up as a nation (Isa. 25:8; 26:19; Hos. 6:1–3; Ezek. 37:1–14), and later on as personal resurrection, around 200 BC. Referring to those who persecuted the just, Daniel writes: 'Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan. 12:1f.). After death God will raise up one and all, rewarding the just and punishing sinners (see II Mac. 7:28).

The promise of resurrection is fulfilled in the New Testament, with the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. He became 'the first-born among many brothers' (Rom. 8:29). Against the Sadducees Jesus teaches that resurrection will surely take place, as promised in the earliest books of the Old Testament which they said they accepted (Matt. 22:31f.; Exod. 3:6). Against the Pharisees he explains that resurrection will not signal a return to an earthly, corruptible life, but rather to a transformed, glorified, and perma-

nent one, ‘for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven’ (Matt. 22:30). Besides, resurrection will be universal (John 5:28f.; Acts 24:15), directly dependent on the risen Christ (1 Cor. 15:13-58), closely associated to the work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11) and the reception of the Eucharist (John 6:54).

(p. 233) The Fathers of the Church wrote extensively about final resurrection, for two reasons: first because the doctrine was cordially contested by many new Christian believers (1 Cor. 15) and by pagans (Acts 17:32; 26:24); and second, because the doctrine of resurrection strongly challenged the anthropological presuppositions of the time, especially Platonic dualisms. Indeed, the resurrection of the flesh at the end of time proclaims the ultimate unity of soul and body in the human being. Resurrection thus speaks of the corporal and social side of salvation, as well as the value of matter, created directly by God.

Belief in the resurrection of the dead seems to have become irrelevant in recent centuries, centuries dominated by idealism centred on the subject, and materialism closed to the spirit. Kant saw ‘no reason whatever to drag about a body for the rest of eternity, a body which, however purified it may be, will nonetheless always be made up of matter’ (Kant 1998: 133). The result, to some degree, may be seen in an ethical and spiritual vision that is individualistic, interior, subjective, unheeding of society and nature, both human and cosmic. Indeed, without the promise of future resurrection, matter becomes irrelevant for life and merely symbolic for religion. Cremation would be neutral (O’Callaghan 2011: 94f.).

Two theological questions regarding resurrection may be considered: the nature of the risen body and the kind of continuity between the earthly body and the glorious one.

First, the nature of the risen body. Paul speaks of the resurrection of a ‘spiritual body’ (1 Cor. 15:44). ‘Our homeland is in heaven’, he says, ‘and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself’ (Phil. 3:20f.). Thomas Aquinas and others mention as characteristics of the risen body spirituality, immortality, incorruptibility (*ST* III, *Suppl*. qq. 79–86). Commenting on the latter, Aquinas says that ‘neither eating, nor drinking, nor sleeping, nor generating belong to the risen state, for all these relate to the corporal life’ (*ST* III, *Suppl*. q. 81, a. 4). Still, Church Fathers for the most part taught that sexual distinction between humans, deriving from being created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26f.), will remain in the risen state. Jesus’ comparison between the risen state and angelic life was meant to avoid an excessively materialistic and worldly view of resurrection. In the risen state, Aquinas adds, the just will not suffer, they will be agile, active, filled with beauty.

Secondly, the identity of the risen body with the earthly one may be understood in the light of Christ’s life on earth and his risen state. Of course, resurrection, which takes place through the power of God, does not involve the same physical matter. Still, the liturgical praxis of venerating the bodily relics of saints and the dogma of the Assumption of Our Lady point towards a real continuity between this life and the next, and not just a spiritual and moral one. The anti-Gnostic expression ‘resurrection of the flesh’, present in

the Apostles' Creed, was understood by Church Fathers as a formulation of the ethical aspect of resurrection. Rufinus said it is used 'so that the faithful know that their flesh, if it has been conserved free from sin, will in future be a vessel of honour, useful to the Lord for all good works' (*Comm*. 43; Rufinus 1954: 81). Recent explanations of resurrection doctrine understand it in terms of 'the resurrection of a life that has once been (p. 234) lived' (Guardini 1954: 69). Resurrection thus expresses the eternal value that temporal and everyday life may assume.

The New Heavens and the New Earth

Scripture depicts the renewal of the cosmos (O'Callaghan 2011: 115–29; O'Callaghan and Sanguineti 2016) in two stages, that correspond to death and resurrection: the destruction of the universe (Matt. 24:7f., and its renewal in terms of a regenerated cosmos: Isa. 65:17f.; Matt. 19:28; Rom. 8:19–21; Rev. 21:1–4). The following text of 2 Pet. 3 is significant: 'The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up … According to the promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells' (vv. 10–13).

The final transformation of the world in the power of the risen Christ will show up God's creation in a special way: Christ as the beginning and end of creation, the One through whom all things were made (John 1:2), the One who 'upholds the universe by his word of power' (Heb. 1:3), the One for whom the world exists (Col. 1:16). All in all, the promise of new heavens and new earth provides a confirmation of the value of human life and activity on earth, and at the same time reminds us that 'here we have no lasting city' (Heb. 13:14). In the renewed cosmos, after the destruction of the universe, the just will experience the glorious beauty of God's finished work.

Final Judgement

The Old Testament may be read as the story of God's judgement over his people. All the successes, failures, catastrophes, triumphs, favourable or adverse happenings were seen to come from God, who protected, instructed, consoled, corrected, and punished his people, in a word, judged them. Most texts speaking of judgement refer to this life, to the world as it is, and therefore are prophetical in kind. However, God's judging interventions may be seen to shift gradually from the prophetic to the apocalyptic, from this life to the next. For the apocalyptic, judgement is not so much an ongoing, world-bound process, but rather a future, definitive, public, and universal event by which God will separate good from evil once and for all. A first century AD apocalyptic text, 4 Ezra, says: 'When the Most High made the world … the first thing he prepared was judgement, and everything that relates to it' (7:70). No longer does God judge the people of Israel on the basis of an ethnic and restrictive criterion, but applies rather an ethical and universal one. Judge-

ment is seen as a call to personal responsibility; each one will have to give an account to God.

This position is assumed in the New Testament, especially in the words of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:7, 10, 12). In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus, presenting himself as the (p. 235) apocalyptic Son of man (see Dan. 7:13), speaks of judgement using apocalyptic language, especially in Matt. 25. 'For the Son of man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done' (Matt. 16:27). And Paul writes: 'For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body' (2 Cor. 5:10).

The doctrine of judgement develops side by side with that of resurrection. Humans will rise up in order to be judged; indeed, our resurrection in the power of Christ will be the cause of our judgement. 'There can be no justice without a resurrection from the dead', says Pope Benedict XVI (*Spe salvi* 42), citing the Marxist author Theodor Adorno. Judgement will be the moment of truth, of universal, undeniable truth. And the One who judges will do so in complete justice because he was the one who offered humans salvation in the first place. As Ratzinger says, 'the truth that judges man has appeared to save him' (Ratzinger 1988: 206). Merciful salvation is offered to humanity until the moment of judgement.

Final judgement has three features: it is universal, based on charity, and definitive. As we saw, judgement will apply an ethical not an ethnic criterion; all will be judged according to their deeds. But their deeds, both good and evil, are understood by the Gospel in personalistic terms. In Jesus' words that sum up the judgement discourse (Matt. 25), 'as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me' (Matt. 25:40, 45). Charity, which will last forever (1 Cor. 13:13), will be the measure of judgement. 'In the evening of our life', says John of the Cross, 'we will be judged on love' (*Counsels of light and love, n. 57*). Besides, judgement will be definitive (Matt. 13:30). At the end of time, says Augustine, there will be just two possibilities: *aut vitis, aut ignis* (*Io. Ev. tr.* 81:3; Augustine 2009: 122), either life, eternal union with Christ who is the vine (John 15:1), or fire, perpetual separation from him.

Judgement is a Trinitarian act. God is the only one, ultimately, who judges. 'Who can forgive sin but God alone?' (Mark 2:7). Yet Christ receives the power to judge from his Father, and it is he who will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. 'The Father judges no one, but has given all judgement to the Son … The Father has … given the Son authority to execute judgement …' (John 5:22, 27). And Jesus adds: 'I can do nothing on my own authority, as I hear I judge; and my judgement is just, because I seek not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me' (John 5:30). At the Parousia, divine 'revelation' (Greek, *apocalypsis*) will be communicated by the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit, 'who searches everything, even the depths of God' (1 Cor. 2:10). After all, 'when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the whole truth. He will glorify me [an expression of the Parousia], for he will take what is mine and declare it to you' (John 16:13f.). In sum, God judges by the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Is judgement an object of hope? Benedict XVI says that ‘faith in the Last Judgement is first and foremost hope’ (*Spe salvi* 43). Christian desire for justice, one of the beatitudes (Matt. 5:6), has much in common with a desire for judgement, since God is the one who will provide justice. ‘I hope as much from God’s justice as I do from his mercy’, writes Theresa of Lisieux (*Lettres*, 226). In fact, the Book of Revelation speaks of the souls of the (p. 236) martyrs who cry out to Christ for justice (Rev. 6:9ff). For the just final judgement will constitute a moment of intense expectation, joy, and wonderment.

Heaven: Eternal Life in the Glory of Christ

People speak of Christian immortality as a ‘going to heaven’, ‘entering the beatific vision’, or ‘eternal glory’ (McGrath 2003; O’Callaghan 2011: 149–88). Perhaps the most precise scriptural term to describe it, however, is ‘eternal life’. ‘Life’ in general terms suggests dynamism, activity, fullness, interiority, happiness, and so forth. But *eternal* life is something else, because it involves a sharing in the life of the One who is eternal, God’s own life. John distinguishes two ways in which God gives life, one now, the other in the future: as *eternal life* for those who now believe (‘He who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life … He who believes has eternal life’, John 5:24; 6:47, etc.), and as the *resurrection* of all at the end of time. ‘He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day’ (John 6:54).

All humans desire perpetual fulness, happiness, and satisfaction. According to Scripture, God promises eternal life through faith in Christ. However, Benedict XVI openly asks: ‘Do we really want this—to live eternally? Perhaps many people reject the faith today simply because they do not find the prospect of eternal life attractive. What they desire is not eternal life at all, but this present life … To continue living forever—endlessly—appears more like a curse than a gift … only monotonous and ultimately unbearable’ (*Spe salvi* 10). What solution may be given to this dilemma?

The Church Fathers described the effect of divine grace on humans in terms of ‘divinization’, whereby God infuses his life into humans making them his children, what John calls a ‘new birth’ (John 3:3). Paul says that ‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us’ (Rom. 5:5). Eternal life provides humans with a partaking in God’s own life, glory, and beatitude. Since God is, as the first Vatican Council declared ‘in himself and of himself most happy and blessed’ (*Dei Filius* 1; DH 3001), those who partake of his life will share in his fullness and happiness. At the final judgement Jesus invites the just to ‘enter into the joy of your master’ (Matt. 25:23). In that sense, those who are saved will not be fulfilled with their own means but because they share in the eternal happiness of God himself, what Benedict calls a ‘plunging into the ocean of infinite love, a moment in which time—the before and the after—no longer exists’ (*Spe salvi* 12), being praised by the Lord of the Universe who proclaims: ‘Well done, good and faithful servant’ (Matt. 25:23).

Of course, divinization does not produce amalgamation, fusion, or merging with the Divinity. Christians are divinized but do not 'become' God. The *Catechism* says: 'To live in heaven is "to be with Christ". The elect live "in Christ", but they retain, or rather find, (p. 237) their true identity, their own name' (*CCC* 1025). The difference between God and creature is expressed in Scripture in terms of the *vision* of God in heaven, a vision of God that produces perfect happiness, and is therefore is called 'beatific vision'. For John, to 'have' life, is to 'see' life (John 3:36). Several texts speak of such a vision (1 Cor. 13:12; 1 John 3:1f.; Matt. 5:8). In the first text Paul writes: 'for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood'. Pope Benedict XII, in his 1336 *Benedictus Deus,* spoke of the direct, open vision of God in heaven: the just 'see the divine essence with an intuitive vision and even face to face, without the mediation of any creature by way of object of vision; rather the divine essence immediately manifests itself to them, plainly, clearly and openly' (DH 1000).

Being unable to see God with their own strength (John 1:18), the saved receive a special capacity from God to be able to see him, the 'light of glory' (as defined at the 1312 Council of Vienne; DH 895). Aquinas expresses this by saying that the divine essence is *quod videtur et quo videtur* (*SCG* III, 51), 'God's essence is that which is seen, and that by which it is seen'.

But do those who are divinized retain their specifically human characteristics: freedom, sociality, temporality? Should they be lost, the role these aspects of our present life on earth play would inevitably become disengaged and isolated from our true, God-given nature. As regards freedom, those in heaven *cannot sin* because they directly perceive God, who is all goodness. But it is also true that they *do not want to sin*. Freedom in heaven, according to Paul and Augustine, is above all liberation from sin, slavery, and concupiscence. But the possibility of sinning is no more a part of freedom than it is a part of being human. In heaven humans encounter perfect identification with themselves and their own aspirations, complete absence of agitation, dissatisfaction, and nostalgia, fulfilment of all they ever searched for during their earthly sojourn, the joy of having obtained the Absolute Good forever, the fullness of freedom.

Neither will the social nature of humanity be eliminated in heaven. Eternal life is marked by never-ending charity (1 Cor. 13:8). And the love of God is expressed also in the joy of communion with others. Cyprian says: 'What glory, what a pleasure it will be when you are admitted to see God … There await for us the multitude of our loved ones, our parents, brothers and sisters, children, who are sure of their safety, yet solicitous for our salvation' (*Ep*. 58:27; *De mort.*, 26). Josemaría Escrivá (1981: 221b): 'After death you will be welcomed by Love itself. And in the love of God you will find as well all the noble loves which you had on earth'.

Likewise, time will be assumed into eternity in heaven, eternity understood not as endless time, but as total presence, in Boethius's words 'simultaneous and perfect possession of the life that never ends' (*consol. phil.* 5.6; Boethius 1999: 132). However, several authors

—Irenaeus, Gregory of Nyssa, Bernard—teach that eternal life will involve never-ending growth. ‘This truly is the vision of God’, Gregory says, ‘never to be satisfied in the desire to see him’. But one must always, by looking at what one can see, rekindle his desire to see more (*Vita Moys*., 2:239; Gregory of Nyssa 1978: 116).

(p. 238) Perpetual Retribution

The sixteenth-century theologian Lessius (1554–1623) taught that the four most difficult mysteries of the faith are the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and the eternity of the pains of hell. And the New Testament does clearly and repeatedly teach that the unrepentant sinner will be condemned forever (Matt. 12:32; 13:42.49f.; 24:31; 25:31f.; 25:41.46, and parallels; 1 Cor. 6:9f.; Gal. 5:19ff.; Eph. 5:5; 2 Thess. 1:9; John 3:18). Doubtless, this is one of the most disconcerting aspects of Jesus’ message of salvation. The possibility of humans being condemned forever has important anthropological implications (relating especially to the meaning of freedom) and more important theological ones (God’s love, mercy, and justice). Paradoxically, the possibility of ‘eternal death’ is rooted in two of the most sublime and liberating truths of the Christian faith: that God is a faithful, loving God, and that humans are truly free (O’Callaghan 2011: 189–221).

Some would say that New Testament texts speaking of condemnation are to be interpreted in a wider context, as performative or existential affirmations. Origen (*C. Cels*. 5:15) and several modern authors, held that these texts are to be considered as threats meant to bring sinners to conversion, and prevent Christians from sinning. At the end of time, says Origen, all without exception will be saved (this is called *apokatastasis*, or universal reconciliation: Acts 3:21. On this theme in Origen, see Ramelli 2013). Doubtless, the biblical texts in question do have a performative side to them, insofar as they move believers to reflect on the gravity of sin. But if a threat is not founded on reality (if performative statements are not based on the assertive ones, to use the terminology of Austin 1989: 133–64), then such texts would be flagrantly misleading in a matter of enormous significance (O’Callaghan 2011: 15–17).

Early Church Fathers spoke of condemnation as a secondary element of the doctrine of Christian salvation. Later Fathers, as well as many saints and spiritual authors, came to speak of hell as a real possibility for many, perhaps a majority of humans, in part due to their opposition to Origen’s *apokatastasis*, in part due to a falling off in fervour among Christians. The contemporary moment has witnessed a considerable decline in this conviction (Walker 1964).

Many questions remain open and not fully resolved in respect of the doctrine of condemnation: what meaning can everlasting retribution have for the individual, whatever for humanity as a whole?; how is a person’s will fixed forever?; would it not be better to say the condemned are annihilated?; how can it be said that in condemning sinners God is just (is an eternal castigation proportionate to a finite, temporal sin?), and merciful?; are humans really capable of committing crimes deserving eternal punishment? Von Balthasar (1988) and others suggest that Christians should hope for the salvation of all (O’Callaghan 2011:

218–21). In general terms Christians should hope and desire and work and pray that all accept saving grace, for ‘God desires all men to be saved’ (1 Tim. 2:4). However, their act of hope is directed towards the grace that God gives to each and (p. 239) every one, and this act cannot vouch for other people’s free response to God’s grace as it does their own.

What non-instrumental role could the doctrine of hell play in the life of Christians and of the Church nowadays? Speaking of perpetual condemnation in his autobiography, John Paul II wrote:

> There is something in man’s conscience that rebels against any loss of this conviction: Is not God who is Love also ultimate Justice? Can he tolerate these terrible crimes, can they go unpunished? Isn’t final punishment in some way necessary in order to reestablish equilibrium in the complex history of humanity? Is not hell in a certain sense the ultimate safeguard of man’s moral conscience?
>
> (John Paul II 1994: 186).

The Stimulus of Hope in the World

We may now ask in what way hope in the beyond serves as a stimulus to Christian hope in the world (O’Callaghan 2011: 225–49). Augustine admonishes his readers ‘not to resist the first coming so that the second may not startle us’ (*Enn. in Ps.* 95:14; Augustine 2002: 435).

The Parousia is essentially a divine act, and will therefore take place when and how God wishes. ‘Of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father’ (Mark 13:32). This is not to say that Christians do not contribute in some way to the coming of Christ, especially through prayer and evangelization. ‘For I tell you’, Jesus says, ‘you will not see me again *until you say*: “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” ’ (Matt. 23:39). And elsewhere, he asks: ‘When the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?’ (Luke 18:8). Besides, Scripture speaks of certain signs that signal the eschatological coming of the kingdom of God: the universal preaching of the Gospel (Matt. 24:14), the conversion of Israel (Matt. 23:37ff.; Rom. 9:3–5; 11:25ff.), and the coming of the Antichrist which will occasion the persecution and apostasy of many Christians (Matt. 10:17–22; 2 Thess. 2:3–10; 1 John 2:18.22; 4:3).

The purpose of these eschatological signs is not one of satisfying the vain curiosity of Christian believers or others, or of predicting the end of the world, but of inviting one and all to a sense of vigilance. Hilary of Poitiers says we do not know when the world will come to an end, yet God in his goodness offers us ‘an ample space of time for repentance, yet keeps us always vigilant by our fear of the unknown’ (*In Matth.*, 26:4). Christians are not meant to install here an earthly paradise, a perfect world. Benedict XVI in the encyclical *Deus caritas est* says that:

> the Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the (p. 240) State … Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply
>
> (*Deus caritas est* 28).

Death, the End of the Human Pilgrimage

Death and mortal life are understood by Christians as ‘the price to pay’ to enter eternal life (Rahner 1961; O’Callaghan 2011: 253–85). Christ himself died before resurrecting and ascending to the right hand of the Father. Likewise, Christians are invited to ‘leave all things’ (Matt. 19:17) in order to enter the joy of the Lord. In that sense, the price of death sets the scene, as it were, for the prize of heaven. ‘With death’, Benedict XVI says, ‘our life-choice becomes definitive’ (*Spe salvi* 45).

Three questions may be considered.

First, death, though a future event, exerts powerful pressure on the present moment that humans attempt to ignore, but which should serve them as a reminder of their finitude. ‘Death is working like a mole’, wrote the poet George Herbert in ‘Grace,’ ‘and digs my grave at each remove’ (Wilcox 2007: 218). For God’s children, death is considered as the end of the human pilgrimage, the end of a trial meant to ensure that they freely wish to live forever in communion with God. Indeed, the Church has taught that full retribution will be obtained by those perfectly purified (and those condemned) straight after death (DH 1000). For this purpose, it is said that death will be followed by a ‘particular judgement’, of each one before God (*CCC* 1022). General judgement is not an alternative to this, but rather is its final, bodily, public manifestation.

Second, death is experienced as something that just should not happen, a reality that all humans instinctively reject as unnatural. Scripture teaches that God destined humans for immortality, but that death entered the world through sin (Gen. 3:17ff.; Wis. 1:13f.; 2:23f.; Rom. 5:12; 6:23; John 1:15). Aquinas, while insisting on the profoundly improper, involuntary character of death, says that ‘the need for humans to die derives in part from nature, in part from sin’ (*Sent.* III, d. 16, q. 1). Though God created humans for immortality, nature was such that it would degenerate and decline if humans did not submit themselves willingly to the Creator by accepting the limits of their created condition. Since humans did attempt to thwart God’s plans through sin, however, death and ensuing disgrace entered the world.

In the third place, as we have already seen, the ultimate horizon of human life, that situates the way humans experience death, is immortality. Life and death are contextualized fully only in the context of the promised life to come. The dread of death is really the dread of what awaits us after death. But just as Jesus transforms immortality into eternal

life (John 6:54), he also transforms death into a blessing. Christians are incorporated into the death and resurrection of Christ through baptismal grace. But this does not (p. 241) mean they do not suffer and fear death as others do. Rather they share in the redeeming work that Christ, though innocent and undeserving of death, carried out by willingly assuming the mortality of humans. Death inflicted on him by sinners was incapable of undoing his filial love of God and brotherly love for humans whose sin he mysteriously took on (2 Cor. 5:21). 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13). For those who believe in him, Jesus transforms the curse of death into a blessing, the ultimate source of despair into an opportunity for giving life. Thus Paul will say: 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (Phil. 1:21).

Life becomes for the Christian a process of gradually dying, dying to self, dying to the world, yet in doing so, gaining life and giving life to the world. 'For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it' (Mark 8:35). Thus Christians 'always carry in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in their bodies' (2 Cor. 4:10). Their union with Christ gradually overcomes the fear that the prospect of death inevitably induces (Heb. 2:14f.; 1 John 4:18).

Purgatory: the Purification of the Elect

Purgatory designates the state of definitive purification, after death, for those who have died in friendship with God but are stained by the remains of sin (O'Callaghan 2011: 286–308). Its existence is indicated in Scripture (2 Mac. 12:40–45; 1 Cor. 3:10–15). In a way purgatory is the most 'human' of Christian doctrines, for it gives expression (1) to the holiness of God who will not endure any blemish in his presence (1 John 3:3; Rev. 21:27); (2) to a realistic appraisal of the sinful condition many if not most Christians live and die in (Matt. 9:36: Rom. 7:15.22–24); and (3) to the unity of the Church, Christ's body, which through a mysterious solidarity makes the purification of its sinful members possible. 'Purgatory shows God's great mercy', writes Josemaría Escrivá (2003: 889), 'and washes away the defects of those who long to become one with Him'.

The fact that the doctrine of purgatory was not defined by the Church until the Middle Ages (key statements being made at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 [DH 856] and at the Council of Florence in 1439 [DH 1304]) does not militate against its existence. Quite the contrary, in fact. If the theology of purgatory did not come to be developed until the medieval and modern period, its existence was clearly though implicitly affirmed by the universal praxis, both East and West, of praying for the dead, a praxis which would be of no benefit to those in heaven or those condemned. As Benedict XVI explains: 'no one lives alone. No one sins alone. No one is saved alone' (*Spe salvi* 48).

Spiritual writers are convinced that the suffering experienced in purgatory is particularly intense, mainly due to the delay in seeing God. Humans are created to rejoice in (p. 242) the presence of God, but in purgatory the pain of not seeing him is no longer mitigated by the distracting consolation and tangible comfort of a created world in which God is per-

ceived as hardly necessary. However, many authors hold that those in purgatory experience deep consolation by being sure of their salvation. Catherine of Genova, a fifteenth-century mystic, speaks often of the joy experienced by those in purgatory. On account of the purification experience, ‘in purgatory we shall all be mystics’ (Starkey-Greig 1940: 40).

Intermediate Eschatology

Christian eschatology reflects and confirms the fundamental polarity between the collective and the individual in human life. Eschatological salvation is directed both to humanity—indeed creation—as a whole, and to each and every one in their individuality. Thus, it has a strong cosmic, corporal, and social component, as well as a spiritual and personal one. The perfection of the universe as a whole requires and redounds in the perfection of each and every one of the elect. Yet the collective refers principally to the end of time, the consummation of history, whereas the individual is linked more with death, in which the person comes to the end of his or her life on earth. This ‘space’ or ‘time’ that elapses between death and resurrection is what is usually called ‘intermediate eschatology’ (O’Callaghan 2011: 309–26).

It has been suggested, mainly by Protestant authors (Cullmann 1965), that the notion of the human ‘soul’ serving as a created element of continuity between death and resurrection, does not belong by right to the Christian doctrinal patrimony. The rightful place of ‘resurrection of the dead’ has been occupied, Cullmann says, by the Platonic concept of the ‘immortality of the soul’, a doctrine of faith by a conclusion of reason. If this is the case, what happens to humans at death? For some, man just disappears to be recreated at the end of time; for others (Barth 1953; Brunner 1953) time no longer exists, so humans die and ‘wake up’ risen; for yet others (Cullmann 1965) the ‘interior man’ survives in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, ‘intermediate eschatology’ is as much as eliminated.

This position renders superfluous the living communion between heaven and earth, which is at the heart of Catholic ecclesiology, liturgy, and spirituality. Protestant authors argue that the doctrine of justification by faith precludes the role of a naturally immortal soul. However, the notion of an elementary human element that survives death is present in Scripture (the *refa’im*). Besides, ‘the idea of the soul as found in Catholic liturgy and theology up to the Second Vatican Council has as little to do with [Greek] antiquity as has the idea of resurrection’ (Ratzinger 1988: 150). The soul ‘rests on a relation, on a relationship with what is eternal, what makes eternity meaningful … The soul is nothing other than man’s capacity for relatedness with truth, with love eternal’ (Ratzinger 1988: 259).

Catholic authors (such as Greshake 1969; Greshake 1998), attempt to resolve the challenge of intermediate eschatology by denying the Parousia, saying, in effect, that (p. 243) people will rise up at the very moment of death. Several reasons militate against this position (Pannenberg 1998: 577–9; Ratzinger 1988: 241–60; Canobbio 2009). First, that in

Scripture ‘resurrection’ is never connected with the moment of death, but to baptism, conversion, and the Parousia. Second, the resurrection of Jesus took place not at his death (as Bultmann thought), but ‘on the third day’. Death and resurrection therefore do not coincide. Third, ‘resurrection in the moment of death’ comes across as a kind of spiritual survival that excludes the bodily, historical, social condition of humans. This would constitute a ‘half resurrection’, a privatization of eschatology. Besides, it would unwarrantedly extend the singularity of the Assumption of Our Lady to one and all. Paul VI stated: ‘Mary is the only human creature, along with the Lord Jesus, her Son, who has entered paradise, body and soul, at the end of her earthly life’ (*Audience*, 15.8.1975).

A 1979 letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith considered the hypothesis of ‘resurrection in the moment of death’ and stated:

> The Church holds to the survival and subsistence, after death, of a spiritual element with consciousness and will, in such a way that the same human “I” subsists, even without the complement of one’s own body. To designate this element the Church uses the term “soul”, widely used in Sacred Scripture and Tradition
>
> (DH 4653).

Conclusion

Eschatology occupies a pivotal place in theology and makes a decisive contribution to many areas of knowledge (Walls 2008: 493–670; O’Callaghan 2011: 329–37; Fergusson and Sarot). Pannenberg speaks of the ‘constitutive significance of eschatology for Christian theology’ (Pannenberg 1998: 532). Barth says that ‘a Christianity that is not totally and utterly eschatological has nothing whatever to do with Christ’ (Barth 1933: 314). The Orthodox author Meyendorff has it that ‘eschatology can never really be considered a separate chapter of Christian theology, for it qualifies the character of theology as a whole’ (Meyendorff 1974: 218). And Ratzinger: ‘In our time, eschatology has moved into the very centre of the theological stage’ (Ratzinger 1988: 1).

Eschatology is closely bound up with Christology; indeed it is the working out and culmination of Christ’s saving work. Likewise, the eschatological nature of revelation and salvation critically determines the nature of the Church, God’s pilgrim people which, as *Lumen Gentium* says (quoting Augustine), is ‘like a stranger in a foreign land, pressing forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God’ (*LG* 8); indeed, the Church ‘will receive its perfection only in the glory of heaven’ (*LG* 48). Likewise, the sacraments anticipate Christ’s return in glory, yet will be no more at the end of time (*LG* 48). As we have seen, eschatology is closely linked with anthropology, since it provides the basis for the fact and content of human immortality, in which nothing human will be definitively excluded, except sin. Eschatology affects ethics very directly, as it gives shape to the ultimate end. It speaks of the intoxicating beauty of the (p. 244) divine reward (eternal life), the gravity and sadness of transgressing God’s law (condemnation), the joyful

possibility of overcoming sin (purgatory), and the essential role of the human body in moral issues (resurrection). Lastly, eschatology is clearly tied in with Christian spirituality, which points always beyond itself, towards God, towards others, towards eternity.

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Eschatology

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The Sacramental Life

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Abstract and Keywords

Divided into two parts, this essay first considers the seven sacraments as encounters with grace mediated by visible signs. But rather than focusing on a general account of sacrament and moving to specific examples, the essay begins with different forms of sacramental act. All sacramentality originates in Christ's union of the human and the divine, and in the intimate link between Christ's person and the life of the Church. The sacraments are divided into three groups: sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, Eucharist); sacraments of healing (anointing the sick and reconciliation); and sacraments in the service of communion (holy orders and marriage). The second half of the chapter concerns 'sacramentology', ways in which sacraments have been described in general terms.

Keywords: Christ, Church, sign, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, anointing, reconciliation, holy orders, marriage

The Sacraments

CHRIST, the Church, the liturgy, and the sacraments are interrelated, like nesting cups, one inside the next. First, Christ is sent by the Father, and, obedient always to his Father's will, he fulfills the divine plan for creation. He shatters the gates of Hades in his paschal mystery and gathers creation into his ascent back to the Father by sending the Holy Spirit to spiritualize all things, human and material. Second, the Church is Christ's mystical body, and is commissioned with the task of continuing this redemption and sanctification. Ecclesiology is only Christology extended beyond the ascension, into history, into our time, the time of the Church. Third, the liturgy is this Church in motion. It is the manifestation of a new creation brought about by the paschal mystery and shared by a social, sacramental body until the Lord of the Church returns as Lord of the world to hand all things over to the Father. And, finally, the sacraments serve the liturgy by causing the glorification of God and the sanctification of man. These two purposes are twinned because when men and women are sanctified, then God is glorified. The sacraments communicate divine life: they inaugurate it, nourish it, heal it, and order it. This is how the

sacraments are categorized: sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, Eucharist), sacraments of healing (anointing the sick and reconciliation), and sacraments in the service of communion (holy orders and marriage). These sacraments accompany the individual human soul from the cradle to the grave, capacitating us for liturgy, which is the Church in motion as Christ's mystical body.

Perhaps the simplest definition of sacrament is to think of it as an encounter with invisible grace mediated by a visible sign. In this light, tradition has called Christ himself a sacrament. He is the primordial sacrament of our encounter with God, and all sacramentality originates in his human-divine union. The Church, in turn, is the fundamental sacrament because we continue to encounter Christ in his mystical body as truly as Peter, James, and John encountered Christ in his historical body. And the seven liturgical rites put a believer into life-giving contact with this mystical body. Christ is the (p. 250) sacrament of the Father, the Church is the sacrament of Christ, and the seven rites are sacraments of the Church.

Sacramental theology has struggled for categories adequate to the nature of the mystery; this chapter looks at a general theory of sacramentology and defines this theological terminology. But since these explanatory words should never be confused with the sacramental reality itself, it seems fitting to begin with the particular sacraments, and treat the vocabulary afterwards. Since the Eucharist receives its own chapter (see Bauerschmidt, this volume), here we will consider the other six sacraments.

The Sacraments of Initiation

Christianity is not primarily a set of doctrines or a social organization; it is Christ's life lived by his disciples. God assumed a human nature in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In Greek the word for 'person' is *hypostasis*, so the union of the divine and human natures in one person is called a hypostatic union. The Christian is baptized into Christ, and the divine life communicated to Christ's humanity is shared with the Christian as eternal life. The sacraments flow forth from this hypostatic union, and Christ is the mediator between God and humankind. The sacraments do not stand between us and Jesus like a wall, they extend from Jesus to us like a bridge. His sacrificial obedience to the Father receives full expression on the cross, and we can swim upstream into the very heart of Christ by entering into the flood of baptismal water opened from his side by the soldier's spear; we can drink his life by opening our mouth to receive the flow of blood from his side. The sacraments are profoundly connected to Christ's humanity.

Sacrament of Baptism

The sacrament of baptism is the most profound change that can occur in a person. It is crossing the threshold from death into life, from darkness into light, from Satan's domain into the kingdom of God. The early Church named baptism by words and phrases such as regeneration, recreation, adoption, the death of sin, the ransom of captives, salvation, healing, purification, burial and rebirth, gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, and putting on the garment of immortality. Baptism creates a union between the believer and Christ,

and the Christian becomes by grace what Christ is by nature. Paul uses the phrase *en Christo* (in Christ) 164 times in his epistles, because Christianity is the life of Christ perpetuated in us. For adults, this life involves a preparation period called the catechumenate. For adults and infants the sacramental rites include being baptized in the font of life, being sealed by chrism oil administered at the hand of the bishop as ordinary minister of confirmation or by the priest at appointed times, and finally being led to the altar for Mass and the food of immortality to strengthen the newborn life of faith. All these steps together make up initiation, even if they are separated by intervals of time.

Baptism is the gate to all other sacraments and to Christian membership in the Church, because here the individual commences life in the mystical body. St Thomas Aquinas was especially clear in associating the rights and responsibilities of a Christian (p. 251) with the character that is bestowed in initiation. A character is an invisible mark on the soul that provides a spiritual power and perfects the soul towards a certain end, in this case, towards the end of worship. By baptism, every Christian participates in the priesthood that Christ left to his Church and thus can assist at Mass by offering the Eucharist that is consecrated at the hands of the priest. The baptismal character obligates and privileges the Christian to participate in the public cult of the Church. It also refreshes the image of God and awakens a life of virtues which are empowered by grace. Baptism is thus said to be the source of the ‘theological virtues’. To the natural virtues of prudence, justice, courage, and temperance, baptism adds the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.

Baptismal water can be understood as tomb, womb, and cleansing: that is, it involves dying to sin, new birth in eternal life, and washing away impurities. After the physical generation that gave a person biological life, baptism is a spiritual regeneration that gives that person eternal life. Like any birth, this can only happen once. Baptism initiates a new state of affairs for a person, and even if it were to be neglected or even renounced, it cannot be undone, and on return to the life of faith it need not be redone because the character it bestows is permanent. In a manner similar to any birth, baptism does not guarantee the life that follows. It is not a magical guarantee of salvation because all sacraments work in cooperation with the recipient’s will. That is why baptism is preceded by a renunciation of sin and a profession of creed, and must be followed by a life of faith. In obedience to Christ’s command in Scripture, the Church has always considered baptism as necessary for salvation, but this needn’t mean that God’s grace is restricted by the lack of human action. Rather it means that God has promised to heal by means of this sacramental gift. The word salvation means ‘healing’; to salve is to apply a healing ointment. Baptism is necessary for our salvation because it forgives original sin in infants, and both original sin and personal sins in adults; if a person is unable to receive baptism, it is still baptismal grace that saves when a person desires healing. This is called ‘baptism by desire’.

Something must be said to indicate that this is not an ordinary washing. A power must be invoked in order for this washing with water to have spiritual effect. Thus, baptism’s material element of water is accompanied by the formula ‘In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’. Matter and form work together when water is being used

sacramentally. God has used water in various ways during the history of salvation—the waters of creation in Genesis, the flood waters of Noah, liberation water of the Red Sea, life-giving water from the rock, repentant water of the Jordan at the hand of John the Baptist—and now God gives water into the hands of the Church for her to use sacramentally. The *epiclesis* (calling down) of the Holy Spirit on the waters makes this a spiritual washing, and what is performed on the body is done to the soul.

Sacrament of Confirmation

The sacrament of confirmation has the closest connection to the sacrament of baptism, whether it immediately follows, or whether the confirmation is separated from the baptism by a period of time. Historians are still researching the origin of confirmation, but (p. 252) the theology of confirmation cannot be determined by history alone. The sacraments of initiation involved numerous rites: entering the baptistry, renunciation of Satan and final exorcism, pledge to Christ and profession of creed, stripping before the washing, and after the washing the donning of a white garment, and anointings of various number and kind depending on location and tradition. After the washing (*baptizo* means to immerse), the brand-new Christian was brought to the bishop so the gift could be sealed (confirmed) with perfumed oil (chrism), especially consecrated for this purpose by the bishop.

The confirmation of baptism should therefore be seen as an act within the initiatory rites, even if separated by a number of years. Confirmation is to baptism what Pentecost is to Easter, and the Son and Holy Spirit never act independently from one another. Yet, the mission of a particular person of the Trinity can be emphasized, and in confirmation the Holy Spirit is said to increase baptismal grace in order to more fully conform the baptized person to Christ’s life.

A seal is called *sphragis* in Greek, Latinized as *charakter*, meaning an engraved mark that is indelible and permanent. In the ancient world, this word was used to name the brand on a sheep, the tattoo a soldier received on enlisting, or the brand on slaves indicating to what house they belonged. The seal marks a state of belonging. But the seal also obliges the owner to protect the object or person marked: scriptural examples are the mark of Cain, Passover blood on the doorpost, the *tau* that Ezekiel saw placed on the forehead of the repentant, or the mark Christ makes on his people in the Book of Revelation.

Both baptism and confirmation bestow a character. (The third and final sacrament to bestow a character, and therefore be unrepeatable, is ordination). The bestowed character places a person in a certain relation to God and to the Church. Baptism increases the visible Church by one, confirmation establishes an individual Christian to serve within the Church, and holy orders places a man in ministerial service to the Church. The baptized Christian has had the Holy Spirit working within him- or herself since baptism, but confirmation confers an advance in spiritual life as this is lived with particularity in the Church. This is why the grace of confirmation is traditionally spoken about with the language of increase or deepening. The confirmed Christian is to take some active part in his or her apostolate, and this means a new status, an advance in the official category to which the

Christian belongs in the organization of the Church. It is a vocation to holiness, and a vocation to share fully in the Church's mission.

The Sacraments of Healing

Two things seem always to accompany the announcement of the kingdom of God in the Gospels, and they are repentance and healing. Matt. 4 says: 'Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" ', and Matt. 9 says Jesus went about (p. 253) 'preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness'. The kingdom of God is victory over sin and death, so when the kingdom of God draws near to a sinful person, it forgives, and when it draws near to a sick person, it heals. Jesus brings victory over Satan's power, and Satan's power has been manifested as both sin and sickness. The sacraments of healing are the continued exercise of Christ's power on these two fronts. Sin has affected the whole person, and the whole person awaits redemption, therefore the sacraments concern both body and soul.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The sacrament of reconciliation is known by many names, each revealing a different facet. It was once commonly known as 'penance' because of the work of satisfaction that the forgiven sinner does, or 'confession' because the contrite heart manifests its regret by admitting sin to God's minister. It can also be called the sacrament of conversion because the state of grace is now restored; the sacrament of forgiveness because of its effect; or the sacrament of reconciliation because the sinner is reconciled to both God and the Church.

Christ's victory over sin is first brought to light in baptism, and the Christian's whole life should be one of conversion. There are, in this sense, three sacraments of forgiveness: baptism forgives original sin and (in the case of adults) personal sins, the Eucharist strengthens charity and forgives venial sins, and penance restores people when they have destroyed charity in the heart. The sacrament of penance arose out of the question of what to do about mortal sin: what shall be done for a person who has been baptized, but has sinned so grievously as to cut himself off from the grace of his baptism?

A venial sin offends and wounds charity, but it is a disordered act, not an act opposed to love of God and neighbour. A mortal sin, however, destroys charity in the heart, turning a person away from God. A venial sin breaks a branch, but a mortal sin is an axe put to the root that would kill the whole tree. So a venial sin can be healed by a strengthening of charity, such as that the Eucharist can provide, and because it increases a state of grace already existing it is called a 'sacrament of the living'. But a mortal sin requires a new initiative of God's mercy, and is classified as one of the 'sacraments of the dead', along with baptism. Penance was thus called 'a second plank of salvation', if there was a shipwreck of baptism.

In the early Church, the canonical order of penance was very much like the order of the catechumenate, because it was as if the sinner needed to be uprooted and replanted in

Christ. The penitent publicly entered the order so that the Church could pray for him, and during his years of penance he was forbidden to receive communion, in other words was excommunicated. This made visible the state of affairs already existing in his heart so it could be treated. By excommunication and absolution, the Church was following Christ's injunction to 'bind and loose', the way one would put a tourniquet on a wound before a patient bled to death. This public order of penitents was rare, extreme, and in most cases allowed only once in a lifetime. Private confession arose out of a desire for more frequent access to confession and absolution, even for venial sins, coupled with a desire for spiritual direction.

(p. 254) There are four necessary elements in the sacrament of reconciliation: contrition, confession, penance, and absolution. The first three are acts of the sinner, the last is God's action through the intervention of the Church. They work together, for sacramental grace must be desired and willingly received:

Contrition.

In this case, the term does not refer to the verbal act of contrition within the rite of confession, but refers to the state of heart that brings a person to the sacrament in the first place. Full contrition has three simultaneous features: it sorrows over a sin, it detests the disordered act, and it resolves not to repeat it. It is possible for contrition to be fed by different motives, just as a person might apologize either sincerely or for more selfish reasons. On the one hand, when contrition is made out of fear of damnation or punishment, then it is called 'imperfect'. Even so, it was moved by the Holy Spirit and can be perfected by the sacrament of reconciliation. On the other hand, sorrow that arises out of love of God is called 'perfect contrition', and it remits venial sins and obtains forgiveness of mortal sins. Augustine pictured such a sinner to be Lazarus already coming forth from the tomb, needing to be loosed by the Church from the fetters of sin.

Confession.

This is an essential part of the sacrament, for without identifying the poison, how can the antidote be given in the right measure? The priest may guide the examination of conscience, but the confession must be freely given. Each of the faithful is bound by obligation to confess mortal sins at least once a year, and without confession a person in mortal sin may not receive communion; the Church strongly recommends regular confession of venial sins. A common image for the priest is that of a physician who searches out the circumstances of the sinner and of the sin, so he may prudently decide what sort of remedy he ought to apply.

Penance.

Part of that remedy is penance, the felt desire to make amends by works of satisfaction. Sometimes this is simple restoration of justice that repairs the harm done; sometimes it is more internal, and reconstructs the weakened soul. Sin always has effects (what scholastics called *reatus*), and even after the sin is forgiven a truly repentant person would de-

sire to purge the *reatus*. The penance is not a punishment; it is a means of making things right and expressing one's sorrow and love.

Absolution.

No one forgives sins but God alone, but he has made his whole Church a reconciliatory presence in the world, and the Church exercises the ministry of the sacrament of penance through bishops and priests. Christ gave the 'power of the keys' to the Church so that what is bound and loosed on earth is bound and loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:19).

The Sacrament of Anointing the Sick

This sacrament is a recognition of our soul-body unity, and that Christ's compassion also extends to a person's physical well-being. The wages of sin is death, Scripture says, and although Christ's resurrection is the first sign of death's defeat, we still carry this new life in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7) that remain subject to suffering, illness, and death. Every illness is death casting its long shadow, and for this reason every illness is a confrontation with our fallen state, even though the Church does not identify any (p. 255) particular sickness as a direct punishment for an individual sin. The sacrament of anointing makes the sickbed an occasion for the power of the resurrection, and a place of reconciling grace.

This sacrament was once known more commonly as 'extreme unction' (anointing at the furthest reaches—*in extremis*). But the sacrament of anointing is encouraged as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, and can be repeated within the same illness when the person's condition significantly worsens. (The sacrament of the deathbed is *viaticum*—the last Eucharist given for the journey.)

Physical recovery may sometimes be the result of this sacrament, but the absence of healing does not indicate an absence of the sacrament's grace. Physical healing may occur if it is expedient for the health of the soul, but the central effects of anointing are: (i) the gift of the Holy Spirit for strengthening and courage; (ii) union with the passion of Christ, making the suffering itself a participation in his saving work; (iii) ecclesial grace by which the community intercedes for the sick person; and (iv) preparation for the final journey. The sacrament of healing is also understood to involve forgiveness because sickness reminds us that judgement day awaits after death. Like all sacraments, it further conforms us to Christ.

The Sacraments at the Service of Communion

Since the Son of Man came to serve, not to be served (Mark 10:45), therefore the Church is a hierarchical society in which parts are ordered in service to other parts. Hierarchy is not a question of power; it is not a matter of one person towering over another person. If anyone is lifted up, it will be in the manner that the crucified one was lifted up.

The Sacrament of Matrimony

This sacrament creates a domestic church. The sacramentality of marriage does not just concern the wedding, it concerns the lifetime conjugal relationship. This is a reminder of the other sacraments as well: all sacraments are concerned with both the ritual that initiates a state of affairs and the life that ensues from it. The scholastic theologians noted that marriage is the first sacrament, since it is a divine ordinance in creation. Marriage is not merely a human institution of social order or family alliances, it is created by God and written in the very nature of man and woman. In one sense, this sacrament existed in the Garden of Eden; in another sense, the natural covenant came to fulfilment when Christ raised it to the dignity of a sacrament. After the fall, marriage carried redemptive power: the husband and wife are each a help to the other's salvation (healing in holiness). Through their partnership in life, they advance ever more and more in virtue and holiness.

There was a flow of love between the persons of the Holy Trinity and creation came forth from it; similarly, there is a flow of love between the husband and wife and from it come children, fidelity, and a holy bond. These are the three goods of marriage that Augustine delineated and which have influenced theology since: *bonum prolis* (the good (p. 256) of offspring); *bonum fidei* (the good of steadfast fidelity); and *bonum sacramenti* (the bond of indissoluble unity that is, in baptized Christians, a sacrament-sign of Christ's bridal union with his spouse, the Church). These goods are the results of love at generative work. They serve the good of the spouses—a *bonum conjugam*—which is a truth being made more explicit in this century, to the point of some calling it a fourth good of marriage.

Christians understand marriage to be a covenant, not merely a contract. A contract can be dissolved when it no longer serves the interests of the parties involved, but a covenant is equal in binding force to a blood relationship. The relationship therefore has a reality, and does not cease even if the consent to the covenant is withdrawn by one or both of the parties. It was this indissolubility to which Hosea was pointing when he compared Yahweh's relationship with Israel as a husband's relationship to an unfaithful wife; it was this indissolubility to which the author of Ephesians was referring when he spoke of the profound mystery that Christ is irrevocably bound to his Church. A marriage that is concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. Modern persons have difficulty with this because they think that at the wedding two people promise always to feel a certain way about each other. In fact, no one can promise such a thing about the future. What is vowed at the wedding, in fact, is that any challenges and opportunities faced in the future will be placed within this relationship and dealt with together, two persons as one. As Chesterton quipped, 'Man is a quadruped'.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

Holy orders 'is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time' (*CCC*, 1536). Ordination means incorporation into an *ordo* ('order' in Latin). In ancient Rome, this designated a governing body, but in the case of the Church the governing office is intimately linked

to two other offices. Christ is prophet, priest, and king, and therefore the offices that co-operate in the Church are a teaching office, a sanctifying office, and a shepherding or governing office. These ministries are exercised in three degrees in holy orders: the bishop, presbyter, and deacon. All three are ordained to ministry, but only the first two degrees are ordained to priesthood. The deacon is ordained, but to ministry and not to a sacerdotal (priestly) rank. The bishop has the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders, and is chief priest of the diocese; the presbyter ('elder' in Greek) is a co-worker of the bishop.

All priesthood comes from Christ, the high priest, the first priest, the primordial priest. If the whole Church has a priestly character, it comes from him. The lay Christian participates in Christ's priesthood in a different way than the ordained priest does, but this does not mean there are two priesthoods, it means there are two ways of participating in Christ's one priesthood. And in no sense are the two ways in competition. In the kingdom of God (unlike in the world), there are no power struggles—not between the head and the body, not between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, not between the priest and the laity.

(p. 257) There are various names to distinguish these two modes of participation. When they are named by the originating sacrament they are called 'baptismal priesthood' and 'ordained priesthood'. When they are named by their ministry they are called the 'common priesthood' and 'ministerial priesthood'. The common priesthood is directed towards the sanctification of the world, and belongs to the secular character of the laity. The ministerial priesthood is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all Christians, serving as a means by which Christ teaches, sanctifies, and governs his Church.

A priest must not only have a vocation (calling) to this office, that calling must be recognized by the Church, which chooses her servants. Both the Eastern and Western Churches choose men only for the clergy. For 1000 years, since the reforms of Gregory VII, the Roman Catholic Church has had the discipline of choosing only men who are celibate to be priest or bishop, but it does recognize the validity of the Eastern married clergy.

Ordination is one of the three sacraments (baptism and confirmation being the other two) which gives an indelible character to a person. The Church's basic visibility as an organized society derives from the three sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and orders. In this sense, there is no 'unordained' member in the Church. These sacraments each bestow a character that places the new believer in a particular place, like a bit of coloured glass being put in its proper place in a stained glass window. A character bestows a spiritual power to serve a certain end; in this case to minister to the people of God. As a result, the power of orders once bestowed can never be lost or taken away. However, for an important reason, a bishop can suspend priestly faculties so that the man can no longer perform priestly ministry, or in other cases, remove the man from the clerical state altogether. But the character remains.

Sacramentology

In numerous dogmatic manuals the sacraments are first discussed in general and then treated individually—genus followed by species, so to speak. This sequence has been purposely reversed here because it can sometimes leave the impression that there is a generic, pre-moulded definition into which all the sacraments must fit. It is true that there are some common features among the sacraments, and metaphysical language will serve to identify them, but we have preferred to start with the sacramental act rather than the theory. A biologist will notice common features in organisms and will create vocabulary to direct one's attention to them, but the life comes first and the description afterwards. So also, the sacramental life comes first and this description now comes afterwards.

Continuing the metaphor, any biological life has certain needs: after being born, the organism grows according to certain laws, and receives exercise and nourishment in order to become healthy and defend itself against disease and injury. The supernatural (p. 258) life of which we have been speaking has similar needs. This eternal life begins in baptism, and the character imprinted on a person gives rights and obligations within the membership of Christ's body. Chief among these rights and obligations are personal sanctification through ascetical discipline and the glorification of God through participation in the eucharistic sacrifice. But this eternal life is not only inflowing, it must also become outflowing in an apostolate, and therefore baptism is confirmed with spiritual gifts that make a person Christ-like in self-giving charity. And the priesthood of Christ in which the whole Church participates, commonly and ministerially, extends from the historical resurrected Jesus to the present day through an apostolic succession. This hierarchical structure speaks of connections between members of the body, like ligaments connect bones, and the circulatory system connects the extremities to the heart. This is eternal life, and so it must be nourished on the Eternal One himself at the table of the Eucharist where his body and blood, soul and divinity are given for our sustenance. When the life of the body is threatened by death, a sacrament is available to salve (heal) the Christian, and when the life of the soul is threatened by sin, a sacrament stands ready to encourage or re-engender charity. And the sacred hearthfire of the home, which is the most natural and human locale, can be elevated to a road to holiness and a sign of the mystical union Christ has with his bride.

This is the reality of sacramental life; the following vocabulary was only forged to define it, and answer questions about it.

Efficacious Sign and Symbol

Some theologians make a contrasting distinction between sign and symbol. They define sign as something that points to a reality other than itself, but contrast it with the richer category of symbol that conveys the reality it symbolizes. For them, a sign is the weaker of the two. Other theologians make a taxonomic distinction, placing the more specific category of symbol under the larger umbrella of sign. It doesn't greatly matter which approach one takes, so long as one is aware of the language game being used. Both ap-

proaches must be protected from diluting the concept of sacrament. Symbol cannot mean 'just a symbol' (a substitute for the real thing), and sign cannot mean merely an announcement or reminder.

We speak, then, both of a sacrament's external visibility and its spiritual effect. A sacrament exists in an outwardly perceptible form that conveys the sanctifying grace (or friendship) of God. The face of redemption was turned visibly towards us in Jesus and that same redemption turns to face us in the sacraments. The sacrament has a public and ecclesial character insofar as it is an official action of the Church; it is more than just a personal theophany. As an official act of the Church, a sacrament is always a personal act of Christ who reaches out through his mystical body. Therefore every sacrament involves the whole Church, and can furthermore be an occasion for the Church to exercise its worship. Sacraments are gifts from Christ, and also a means for believers to exercise (p. 259) their active membership in the Church. As a tangible pledge or embodied promise, a sacrament therefore has three dimensions: they remind us of something past (the historical passion of Christ), effect something present (our justification and increased charity), and foretell something yet to come (our heavenly beatitude).

Sacraments cause what they signify, and sufficient weight must be placed on both parts of the definition: 'efficacious' and 'sign'. The sacrament's efficacy derives from God's promise to sanctify. The sacrament's sign-quality conveys that sanctity through appropriate symbols: water is womb, tomb, and cleansing; oil is exorcism, healing, and royal anointing; hand-laying blesses and commissions to a task; vows create ontological bonds. Augustine said, 'My friends, these realities are called sacraments because in them one thing is seen, while another is grasped'. If you like, there are layers.

Sacramentum Tantum, Sacramentum et Res, Res Tantum

By this very fact of layering, it is possible to distinguish three things: (i) the sign; (ii) that of which it is a sign; and (iii) the final reality brought to be. In scholastic jargon, these are the *sacramentum tantum* (sacramental sign alone), the *sacramentum et res* (sign and the reality it effects), and the *res tantum* (the union with Christ that is bestowed by means of that sacramental reality). It's not that there are three things in a sacrament; it's more that one can attend to the sacrament in three ways, at three levels. The eye can look at the simplest level and notice the outward sign itself, which is composed of thing and word. The thing is either a physical substance or an action perceptible to the senses: water is the *sacramentum tantum* in baptism, oil in confirmation, bread and wine in Eucharist, confession and absolution in reconciliation, oil in anointing of the sick, the exchange of vows in marriage, and hand-laying in ordination.

But there is more. These signs are efficacious—they bring about something that the eye cannot see, but faith can. This is the *sacramentum et res*. In the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and ordination it is a character, in the Eucharist it is the true body and blood of Christ, in penance the inner healing of the penitent, in anointing the recuperation of the soul, and in matrimony the indissoluble bond.

And there is still more. There is a third and final *res* to notice, and it is the same for each sacrament, because the *res tantum* for each sacrament is union with Christ. The sign signifies a reality, which is, in turn, the sign of a final thing (the *sacramentum tantum* is an efficacious sign of a *res*, and that *sacramentum et res* causes the *res tantum*).

Valid and Invalid, Valid and Fruitful

For a sacrament to be valid, the proper form and matter must be used. Put simply, using the words of St Thomas, 'the words by which the sacraments are sanctified are called the form of the sacraments; and the things which are sanctified are called (p. 260) the matter'. The material element of water can be used in many ways—for drinking, splashing, painting when mixed with colour—so if water is to be used sacramentally to wash clean a soul, then it must be accompanied by a certain formula and with the intention to do what the Church does when it uses this water. The matter and the form make up the external rite, and they have been fixed by institution, doctrine, and tradition. Regarding the matter, one must use water in baptism, not sand; there must be wheat bread and grape wine to consume in the Eucharist, no other food may be substituted; the vow given in marriage must be free, otherwise the marriage is invalid. Regarding the form, one must use the formula prescribed: the baptism is done 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', and the eucharistic consecration is done by reciting Christ's command to do what he did at the Last Supper. If the proper form and matter are not used, the sacrament is invalid. There is no sacrament.

However, it must be emphasized that the Church desires more than mere validity in her children's sacramental life. Love desires to be met by love! The sacramental expressions of God's love should produce a response in the heart of the person receiving the sacrament. The faith of the recipient is not a condition for a valid sacrament, because God's pledge of love remains objectively offered. This objective promise by God is asserted by the phrase *ex opere operato* (literally: 'by the fact of the action's being performed'). The phrase does not indicate something magical or mechanical, it indicates that the grace offered in the sacrament depends on God's faithfulness to his word, not on the personal holiness of the minister or the personal faith of the recipient. However, there is something that depends on the disposition of the person receiving the sacraments, and that is their *fruitfulness*. To the objective validity should correspond a subjective fruitfulness. That it is possible for a sacrament to be 'valid but unfruitful' is an indication of the objective grace of God, because the sacraments are means of grace, not merely signs of faith.

Living and Dead, Revival and Desire

Any break between validity and fruitfulness is undesirable and abnormal, but it can happen due to our human condition. The fact of this irregularity has required the creation of a way to account for it. These categories are not contrived, they are a way to talk about an anomaly, which is always more complicated than normality.

If a person is not in a state of grace when a sacrament is received, then the sacrament brings new life to the dead. Thus, baptism and penance (when the latter is dealing with mortal sin) are called ‘sacraments of the dead’. They confer or restore supernatural life to souls spiritually dead in sin. However, if the sacrament is received when the person is, in fact, in a state of grace, then they are called ‘sacraments of the living’ (confirmation, Eucharist, anointing, marriage, holy orders). The sacraments of the dead give initial grace; the sacraments of the living strengthen, uphold, and increase grace. ‘Increase’ (p. 261) is only a quantitative way of speaking about growth in closeness to God; ‘closeness’ is itself a spatial way of speaking about growth in intimacy with God.

If a person has received a valid sacrament, but put an obstacle in the way of sacramental grace, then when that hindrance is finally overcome the grace can finally reach the soul, like a flood of water can reach parched land when a dam is dismantled. In such cases, tradition speaks about the ‘revival of a sacrament’. In this case, the reception precedes the religious disposition which is required for a fruitful reception. (Partial revival is also possible.) The mirror image of this case is called a ‘sacrament of desire’ wherein the effects of forgiveness might precede the actual reception of baptism. Since God is not ecclesiastically hobbled, he might bestow the fruits in advance of the sacrament, but the sacrament of desire should grow to completion as a real sacrament. The desire spoken about here is the will to do all things necessary for salvation, and thus especially to receive baptism.

Conclusion: Why Sacraments?

The word ‘mystery’ has the sense of a sacred thing that lies concealed, but with which we can come into contact. In a sacrament, a divine power effects our salvation (healing) under the veil of sensible things. Sacraments are for the promotion of worship of God and the healing of sin.

Signs are of various types. There are natural signs whereby we know a cause from its effect, or the existence of something no longer seen. There are human signs, such as speech, gesture, posture, and instrumental acts. And there are signs instituted by God, first in the Old Testament where God’s divine power was revealed in signs of manna, water from the rock, and blood on the doorpost, and now also signs in the New Testament. Sacraments are signs that operate within the new covenant flowing from the humanity of Christ. We do not know how God would sanctify animals, who lack an intellect; we do not know how God would sanctify angels, who lack a body; but for human beings, who are both body and soul, a visible sign can become a sacrament of an invisible grace, instituted for our justification. Sacraments, then, are God’s way of encountering human beings in their human mode of existence, and thus lift up a person to heaven. Religion is done by both body and soul, and sanctification is done to both body and soul.

That is why St Thomas asserted so emphatically that the sacraments derive from the humanity of Christ: sacraments flow from the incarnation, the act wherein Christ entered our humanity. Christ instituted all the sacraments. And Athanasius writes, ‘Like a musician who has attuned his lyre… so the Wisdom of God, holding the universe like a lyre,

adapting things heavenly to things earthly, and earthly things to heavenly, harmonizes them all' (*Against the Heathen* 42). The world's latent sacramental potency is actualized in the Incarnation, so matter itself can now serve as a ladder on which God, descending, and man, ascending, can meet in love.

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The Sacramental Life

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The Liturgy

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Abstract and Keywords

Liturgy, the Church's public worship, embodies the faith of the Church, and has been drawn on as a source for theology from the early centuries of Church history. This article considers the Church's theology of the liturgy—how the liturgy functions as vehicle through which God extends his saving action accomplished in Christ to each generation by the power of the Holy Spirit-as well as the relationship between liturgy and theology. It then discusses elements of the outward form of the liturgy and their meaning. Finally, there is consideration of characteristics of Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, including its treatment of the nature of the liturgy, the role of the Word in the liturgy, and the relationship between liturgy and conversion.

Keywords: liturgy, worship, Vatican II, Sacrosanctum Concilium, prayer, Eucharist, symbols, priest, ritual, paschal mystery

THE word 'liturgy' refers to the public worship of the Church, including the rites for the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours, the liturgical calendar, and rites for celebrations such as funerals, the dedication of churches, and consecration to religious life. Because the liturgy is the Church at prayer, it embodies the faith of the Church and from the early centuries of the Church has been drawn on as a source for theology. As Lambert Beauduin explained, 'The liturgy is theology, not scientifically expounded, but applied to the art of glorifying God and sanctifying souls' (Beauduin 1929: 105–106).

This article has three parts. The first part considers the theology of the liturgy: what God is doing in the liturgy and why it was given to the Church. The second part describes the elements that make up the liturgy: assembly and ministers, signs and symbols, texts, ritual actions, and so forth. Finally, Vatican II's 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) was the culmination of more than a century of reflection on the nature of the liturgy that led to reform in the way that the liturgy was celebrated. This third part of this article considers some of the key points of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* which are important for the Church's understanding and practice of the liturgy today.

The Theology of the Liturgy

To understand what God is doing in the liturgy, it is helpful to consider its origins in the context of salvation history. In sum, God who wanted all to be saved and know the truth called a people, did mighty works to deliver them, made a covenant with them, and spoke to them through the prophets—all as preparation for his saving work in his Son, Jesus Christ, who made it possible for human beings to be forgiven of their sins and reconciled to God. In his redemptive death and resurrection, Christ gave perfect glory to God. In order that the redemption and reconciliation Christ won could be (p. 264) communicated to those for whom he won it, as the Father sent Christ, Christ then sent his apostles empowered by his Spirit. The apostles preached the gospel of Christ's redemption and brought it 'into effect through the sacrifice and the sacraments, the center of the whole liturgical life' (*SC* 6). Thus, ever since the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost inaugurated the time of the Church, Christ has been manifesting, making present, and communicating his work of salvation through the liturgy of the Church until he returns (*CCC* 1076).

The liturgy, then, is not merely a sequence of ceremonies with regulations governing their proper performance. It is the vehicle through which God extends his saving action accomplished in Christ to each generation by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the *Catechism* explains:

> In the liturgy of the Church, it is principally his own Paschal mystery that Christ signifies and makes present … His Paschal mystery is a real event that occurred in our history, but it is unique: all other historical events happen once, and then pass away, swallowed up in the past.
>
> The Paschal mystery of Christ, by contrast, cannot remain only in the past, because by his death he destroyed death, and all that Christ is—all that he did and suffered for all men—participates in the divine eternity, and so transcends all times while being made present in them all. The event of the Cross and Resurrection *abides* and draws everything toward life
>
> (*CCC* 1085).

Because of this, the Church's liturgy both recalls the events through which worshippers were saved and actualizes those events, making them present.

Christ's presence in the liturgy may be described in four dimensions (*SC* 7). First, Christ is present in the Eucharistic liturgy, both in the person of his minister, the priest, who presides *in persona Christi*, and above all under the eucharistic elements. Second, Christ is also present bestowing the fruits of his Paschal mystery in the liturgical celebrations of the other sacraments, where, by his action and the power of the Holy Spirit the sacraments make present efficaciously the grace they signify. Third, Christ is present in his word, and is speaking in the proclamation of Scripture in the liturgy. Finally, Christ is present when the Church prays and sings, as he promised in Matt. 18:20.

Every liturgical action of the Church is therefore a point of contact with God, an encounter between Christ who is present and the Church; this is especially true of the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments. This encounter is mediated by signs perceptible to the senses, by means of which 'human sanctification is signified and brought about in ways proper to each of these signs' (*SC* 7). As a genuine encounter, the liturgy is not a monologue but a dialogue initiated by God between God and the Church: 'in the liturgy God is speaking to his people and Christ is still proclaiming his Gospel. And the people are responding to God by both song and prayer' (*SC* 33). The liturgy comprises both the action of God towards the Church, sanctifying it, and the action of the Church responding to God by offering public worship.

(p. 265) Since it is in Christ that the Church encounters God in the liturgy, the liturgy is the exercise of Christ's priestly office. As the one priest who is able to offer perfect worship, Christ joins the Church to himself in offering this worship to the Father:

> In the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and his members. From this it follows that every liturgical action, because it is an action of Christ the priest and his Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its effectiveness
>
> (*SC* 7).

Through the liturgy, Christ thus continues the work of human redemption, drawing God's people into participating in this work. God's action sanctifying the Church and the Church's response offering public worship are inseparable, and their unity is guaranteed by the priesthood of Christ; from Christ the liturgy receives its power to bring the divine plan in salvation history to fulfilment.

The Church understands the liturgy as the work of the Holy Trinity. Along with Christ's unique work in the liturgy, God the Father and the Holy Spirit are also at work, as elucidated in the *Catechism* (*CCC* 1077–1109). God the Father is both the source and the goal of the liturgy. Everything God has done in creation and salvation is a blessing, and this blessing is 'fully revealed and communicated' in the liturgy (*CCC* 1082). The Church responds to God's blessings in thanksgiving and praise, and offers to the Father from his gifts, praying that God's blessings will bear life-giving fruit.

The work of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy may be summarized in four aspects. First, the Spirit prepares those in the worshipping assembly to encounter Christ in the liturgy, inspiring in them conversion and faith so that they may receive the graces given in the celebration. Second, the Holy Spirit recalls and reveals Christ to the faith of the assembly, giving life to the proclamation of the Word so that it both teaches and brings about a faith-response that enables worshippers to live out what is proclaimed, and also inspiring praise for God's saving deeds. Third, by his transforming power, the Spirit makes Christ's saving work present and active: while Christ's Paschal mystery cannot be repeated, each time the Paschal mystery is celebrated in the liturgy, the Holy Spirit makes it present. Fi-

nally, as Spirit of communion, the Holy Spirit unites the Church to the life and mission of Christ. In every celebration of the liturgy, the Holy Spirit brings worshippers into communion with Christ, thereby forming his Body. The Spirit is thus the source of the unity of the liturgical assembly, bringing about both communion with the Trinity and communion among the members he gathers into one Body.

There is only one Church, which includes both those who glorify God eternally in heaven and those still on earthly pilgrimage. Since the liturgy is the action of this one Church, of the whole Body of Christ, there is only one liturgy: it is the same liturgy that is celebrated under the veil of holy signs on earth and without signs in heaven. The Book of Revelation describes the heavenly liturgy as centred on God on his throne with Christ the Lamb and the living water of the Holy Spirit flowing from the throne; around the throne, giving praise and glory to God, are the heavenly powers and all creation, the (p. 266) patriarchs and apostles, the martyrs, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all those redeemed by Christ. When the Church on earth celebrates the liturgy, the Holy Spirit enables it to be drawn into that eternal liturgy, and share in a foretaste of it.

While the liturgy of the Church allows worshippers to participate in the heavenly liturgy which is beyond time, its earthly celebration takes place within the ongoing temporal reality of ever-changing days, seasons, and years. Since the Church in its liturgy seeks to celebrate the entire mystery of salvation, from creation to consummation at the end of time, it represents the drama of salvation history ritually, through the liturgical calendar, especially the work of Christ: ‘within the cycle of a year, moreover, the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the Lord’s return’ (*SC* 102). Through the liturgical year ‘the economy of salvation is at work in the framework of time’, and ‘the kingdom of God enters into our time’ (*CCC* 1168).

The liturgical year is centred on the celebration of the Paschal mystery at Easter, with the season of Lent to prepare for it, and the Easter season afterwards to celebrate the consequences of Christ’s resurrection victory and make ready for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Similarly, the celebration of the incarnation at Christmas is prepared for by the season of Advent beforehand, with the multifaceted grace flowing from the incarnation communicated during the liturgies of the Christmas season, especially Epiphany. Each week of the year culminates with the celebration of the Paschal mystery on the Lord’s Day, the day of the resurrection, and the pre-eminent day for the faithful to assemble for the Eucharist. Throughout the year the various mysteries of Christ’s saving work are commemorated on specific days. Every celebration of a particular aspect of the mystery of salvation includes readings from Scripture describing what is being celebrated. Prayers in the liturgies of those feasts announce that the particular mystery of Christ’s life being celebrated is happening ‘today’; as Beauduin expressed it, the liturgical cycle makes worshippers contemporaries of Christ.

Further, taking part in a liturgical celebration of one of the mysteries of Christ’s life is not like looking at a museum painting portraying a scene from the Gospels, and thinking

about a past event that is absent; it is a means of participating in a saving reality that is made present in the liturgy. In a homily for the feast of the Ascension, Pope Leo the Great (Pope AD 440–461) stated: 'What was visible in the life of our redeemer, has passed over into the *sacramenta*'. By *sacramenta*, Leo meant not only the rites that later became known as the 'seven sacraments', but also major feasts such as the Ascension where worshippers could receive transforming grace from the victorious Christ ascending to the Father's right hand. Through the liturgical year, then, 'Recalling thus the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of the Lord's powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present in every age in order that the faithful may lay hold on them and be filled with saving grace' (*SC* 102).

While the liturgical calendar is made up of celebrations assigned to dates on the earthly calendar, it also shows the Church's unity with the heavenly liturgy. On particular dates of the Church year, the Church honours Mary, the Mother of God, who is 'inseparably linked to the saving work of her Son', and, as 'most excellent fruit of redemption', is (p. 267) that which the Church longs and hopes to be (*SC* 103). The Church also celebrates those who allowed the Holy Spirit to unite them to Christ's death and resurrection in a particularly clear way: the martyrs and other saints. In these celebrations the Church gives glory to God for those who now sing his perfect praise, asks for their intercession, and looks to their example for encouragement.

In seeking to allow worshippers to enter into deeper union with the mystery of Christ and allow all time to be permeated with the reality of the resurrection, the Church's liturgy makes use not only of weekly and yearly cycles, but of the hours of the day as well. The Liturgy of the Hours, composed of seven distinct liturgies each day containing psalms, readings from Scripture, the Fathers and the saints, prayers, and hymns appropriate to the time of day, feast, or season, is 'so arranged that the whole course of day and night is made holy by the praises of God' (*SC* 84). In the Church's celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours, Christ continues his priestly work through his Church, joining it to himself in singing the hymn of praise sung eternally in heaven and interceding for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; Christ with his Body gives glory to the Father in the Holy Spirit, and all the faithful who join in this 'public celebration of the Church' are exercising their baptismal priesthood (*CCC* 1174). Celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours both express and accomplish the sanctification of time.

All of the Church's liturgical celebrations have strong formative power. The theology and imagery of the prayers and Scripture readings, the repeated ritual actions, the rhythm of the liturgical calendar, the sung texts, and visual components all provide rich instruction in the faith. Even more importantly—since the primary purpose of the liturgy is not didactic—celebrating the liturgy puts worshippers in the position of turning away from self-preoccupation and instead focusing their attention on God as the one who alone is worthy of all praise and whom they are called to serve and obey, thus drawing them into deeper conversion. In Eucharistic celebrations, 'by offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves as well' (*SC* 48). When worshippers participate in a liturgical celebration they enter into a

spiritual world where they can learn to understand reality as God does, hear him speak to them through his Word, and learn the Scripture-rooted language in which they can respond.

In order for worshippers to experience the effects of the liturgy's formative power, they must, of course, be open to the work of the Holy Spirit through the liturgy to draw them into a deeper union with God and a more Christ-like life. For worshippers who are properly disposed, celebrating the liturgy nourishes and strengthens their faith, enabling them to serve the Lord more faithfully, and to bear witness to him to those outside the Church. In sacramental celebrations, the sacraments 'do indeed impart grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them disposes the faithful most effectively to receive this grace in a fruitful manner, to worship God rightly, and to practice charity' (*SC* 59).

Finally, the experience of hearing the same prayers and readings, participating in the same ritual actions, and making the same responses in word and act together with the rest of the assembly, forms worshippers into deeper unity as the Body of Christ on earth, the Church.

(p. 268) Liturgy and ecclesiology are inseparable: any discussion of the theology of the liturgy involves the theology of the Church. At the Second Vatican Council, both *Lumen Gentium* 11 ('Constitution on the Church') and *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 10, described the eucharistic liturgy as the source and summit of the Church's life. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* specifies: 'the liturgy is the source for achieving in the most effective way possible human sanctification and God's glorification, the end to which all the Church's other activities are directed' (*SC* 10).

The celebration of the liturgy makes the Church present and the liturgy (most of all the eucharistic sacrifice) is the outstanding means manifesting 'the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church' (*SC* 2). The Church is the sign of the communion in Christ between God and humanity, and the liturgy manifests this. In the liturgy, the whole Church on earth can reach its maximum actualization as Body of Christ (Vagaggini 1976: 513), and it is in liturgical celebrations that the mystery of the Church as Body of Christ is most clearly seen. The liturgy both constitutes the Church (as seen primarily in sacramental celebrations) and also expresses the Church (as evident in the Liturgy of the Hours). The 'most intimate cooperation' between the Holy Spirit and the Church is achieved in the liturgy (*CCC* 1108), which is their common work. As these interrelationships demonstrate, every celebration of the liturgy reveals an underlying ecclesiology, and any theology of the Church must include treatment of the role of the liturgy to be complete.

There is an essential relationship between the Church's liturgy and theology. The liturgy has been described as 'a certain phase of revelation, a certain way in which the meaning of salvation is realized in us' (Vagaggini 1976: 3). Because of the liturgy's unique role in mediating the mystery of salvation and in forming and handing on the faith of the Church, from the earliest centuries it was treated as a privileged witness to apostolic tradition. While Prosper of Acquitaine's dictum, *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* ('let the

law of worship be the foundation for the law of belief') was made in reference to one particular situation in the fourth century, it illustrates the early understanding of the authority of the liturgy in doctrinal matters.

Liturgy can be a source for theology because it has been accepted and practised by the Church community as a whole, as well as approved by those with responsibility for assuring that continuity with the apostolic tradition is maintained; also, throughout the centuries, the Church has added or modified elements of the liturgy to clarify aspects of the faith or protect against heresy. In recent times, popes have continued to appeal to the authority of the liturgy in their most solemn teaching. In addition, in a private audience, Pius XI (Pope AD 1922–1939) affirmed that the liturgy is the most important organ of the ordinary magisterium of the Church, noting that the liturgy is not the *didascalia* (teaching) of any particular individual, but of the Church. Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, in developing its theology of the liturgy, cites eight different liturgical texts.

In drawing on liturgy as a source for theology, certain considerations must be kept in mind. Although the texts of the prayers alone could provide material for a basic theology of God, Christology, soteriology, anthropology, and so forth, liturgy cannot be (p. 269) reduced to texts. It is an action that includes ritual acts, gestures, postures, and musical and other elements that provide the context within which the theological meaning of the texts becomes clear. In using the liturgy as a *locus theologicus* it is necessary to take into account the genres of these various elements of the liturgy and to understand the meaning of each element in light of its place in the whole and its relationship to the other elements. Also, liturgies that are more ancient in origin, having roots in the early centuries and having been widely celebrated for hundreds of years, have more authority for theology than local, more recent liturgies.

The first section of this article has considered how God acts through the liturgy, with some discussion of the formative power of the liturgy, the relationship of liturgy and ecclesiology, and liturgy as *locus theologicus*. In the celebration of the liturgy, God makes the mystery of salvation present, draws worshippers into this mystery, and empowers them to live it out, and simultaneously enables them to pray in community. In order for this to happen, the liturgy must have an outward form through which God can act in the ways that have been described and worshippers can respond.

The Elements that Make Up the Liturgy

The Church's liturgy is made up of many components, such as prayers, readings from Scripture, and ritual actions. The texts and rites of the liturgy are contained in the Church's liturgical books, including the Missal (for Mass), the Ritual (for the other sacraments), and the Lectionary (the assigned Scripture readings). The official text of the liturgy in the Roman rite is in Latin; translations into modern languages are approved by the

Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments and confirmed by the pope.

The whole assembly of the baptized celebrates the liturgy, and communal celebration of liturgical rites is preferred to private celebration (*SC* 27). When the liturgy is celebrated, all members of the assembly participate according to their role in the Church. Those ordained to serve the community as priests are enabled by the Holy Spirit to act in the person of Christ and preside at the celebration of the Eucharist and other sacraments, and those ordained as deacons assist them in specific ways. The congregation also has an active role in the liturgy, as well as those who act as readers, servers, cantors, or choir members.

Because human beings are both body and spirit, they use signs and symbols that can be perceived by the senses as a means of expressing and perceiving invisible spiritual realities, and communicating with each other and God. The liturgy makes use of signs and symbols deriving from both creation and human culture (such as washing or breaking bread), and these signs and symbols are understood through the lens of Scripture. For example, in the Old Testament ashes were used for penitence, water for (p. 270) purification, oil for the anointing of kings and priests, stones for altars of sacrifice, incense to signify acceptable prayer, and flames to call attention to the presence of the Lord. In the New Testament, Christ made use of the elements of the material world—water, bread, and wine—as efficacious signs. Liturgical signs are also drawn from images in Scripture, such as Christ the light of the world, given tangible form in the Paschal candle illuminating the night of the Easter Vigil.

The spoken elements of the liturgy fall into several categories. There are dialogues in which the presider greets the congregation, or invites them to pray, and they respond. Some prayers asking for mercy or offering praise, the profession of the Creed, and responses to the intercessions, are said by the presider and the congregation together. Some prayers are offered by the presider alone on behalf of the congregation, who give their assent by responding ‘Amen’, while others are prescribed private prayers for himself, which he says quietly. The proclamation of the assigned texts of Scripture from the Lectionary by lectors, cantors, deacons, or priests, provides the focus for each liturgical celebration. Throughout a liturgy, there are times of silence so that the assembly can reflect on what has been spoken and interiorize it, or pray.

A liturgical celebration also involves prescribed postures, gestures, and actions which both express interior dispositions and foster them; common postures and gestures also signify and reinforce the unity of the worshippers. Standing is a sign of respect, as is seen when the congregation stands for the proclamation of the Gospel, the profession of the Creed, the Prayer of the Faithful, during orations by the celebrant, and when he enters and departs; it was also the posture of the priest offering sacrifice in the Old Testament. Sitting is the posture of a leader who presides (which is why the bishop has a special chair) and may be the posture of a teacher who gives instruction; sitting is also the posture of those who listen attentively, as worshippers during the proclamation of Scripture

and the homily. Kneeling expresses humility, penitence, or adoration. Genuflection signifies adoration and is done when passing before the Blessed Sacrament, and by the priest at three prescribed points in the Eucharistic liturgy. Bowing expresses reverence, as when the congregation bows at the mention of Christ's incarnation during the Creed, or when they bow their heads before they receive communion or receive a solemn blessing. Prostration signifies solemn petition, as is seen when candidates for ordination or religious consecration prostrate themselves while the saints are invoked.

In addition to postures, liturgical celebrations also make use of many gestures, to help convey the meaning of what is taking place. A sign of the cross made on the forehead signifies claiming a person for Christ, and when made on the senses claims Christ's protection; when the Gospel is proclaimed, worshippers make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart with the prayer that Christ's word may be in their mind, on their lips, and in their heart. A priest makes a large sign of the cross with his hand to bless members of the faithful and they make it over themselves simultaneously to invoke this blessing; priests also make a sign of the cross over things used in the liturgy, to bless them.

The gesture of striking the breast expresses repentance and humility (see Luke 18:13; 23:48), while the washing of hands signifies cleansing. The laying on of hands on a (p. 271) person or over the eucharistic gifts invokes the power of God. The priest's kissing the altar signifies reverence and honour, while worshippers' exchanging the kiss of peace expresses reconciliation and respect for each other as members of Christ's body. Gestures and postures are sometimes combined to call attention to the significance of a part of the liturgical action, as when the importance of the proclamation of the Gospel as the culmination of the reading of Scripture is shown in the carrying of a special Book of the Gospels in procession with candles to the place where it will be proclaimed, the priest's incensing of the book before proclaiming the Gospel, and his kissing it afterward.

Along with material signs, postures, and gestures, there are also liturgical acts. For example, at the rite of the dedication of a church (or of an altar), relics are enclosed in the place prepared beneath the altar and then sealed there. Each year, normally at the chrism Mass, the bishop mixes balsam or perfume with olive oil to make the chrism which will be used in Christian initiation and ordinations, and also in dedicating churches and altars.

The Church's liturgy is celebrated in a church building or chapel that has been dedicated for divine worship. The community of the faithful are themselves a 'temple of the living God' (2 Cor. 6:16), and the buildings where they come together to worship 'signify and make visible the Church living in this place' (*CCC* 1181). While a church building provides a place to celebrate the earthly liturgy, it is also a symbol of the Father's house for which all earthly worship is a preparation.

Within the church building, the altar as 'center of the thanksgiving that is accomplished through the Eucharist' (*GIRM* 296), is both the place where Christ's sacrifice is made present sacramentally, and the table to which the faithful are invited to participate in the sacrifice; a cross with Christ crucified is on or near the altar. The chalice and paten used

for Mass are to be made of precious metal, normally gold, since in them the bread and wine are offered and consecrated, and from them the Body and Blood of Christ are received. The tabernacle, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, has a place of prominence in the church, where it is easily visible and fosters prayer. The ambo, a lectern that is normally stationary, is the place where the Word of God is proclaimed in the liturgy. The celebrant's chair signifies his office of presiding over the worshipping assembly and of directing their prayer. The church also has a font for baptisms and an appropriate place for the sacrament of penance.

In Catholic churches of the Eastern rite, icons of Christ, the Blessed Mother, the saints, and angels have places of honour and are understood to mediate the presence of those they depict. In Western Catholic worship, images have a primarily pedagogical function, attempting to communicate visually the Gospel message given in the words of Scripture; they provide a means through which the faithful can honour the holy ones they represent. Images of Mary and the saints also bear witness to how worshippers at sacramental celebrations are united with them in the communion of saints, and of how the earthly liturgy offers a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy.

During liturgical celebrations, ministers wear the vestments designating their position in the worshipping community. All ministers wear an alb, a long white garment normally tied at the waist with a cincture. Over the alb, priests and deacons wear a stole, (p. 272) a long strip of fabric; a priest wears it around his neck, so that it hangs in front, while a deacon wears it over his left shoulder and drawn across his chest to the right side. A priest wears a chasuble, a heavier outer-garment, over the alb and stole; the deacon wears a tunic called a dalmatic.

In the Roman rite, different colours are used to express the seasons of the liturgical year or the significance of a particular liturgical celebration. At each liturgy, the stoles, chasubles, and dalmatics worn by priests and deacons are in the colour assigned to the season or feast being celebrated. White is used during Easter and Christmas seasons, for most other celebrations of the Lord, and for celebrations of the Blessed Virgin Mary, angels, saints who were not martyrs, and a few special saints' feasts. Red is used for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost, for most feasts of the apostles and evangelists, and for celebrations of martyr saints. Green is used during Ordinary Time. Violet is used during Advent and Lent.

The Church's use of song and music in the liturgy is rooted in their use in worship in the Old Testament and in early Christian communities. Song that is bound closely to the text of the liturgy 'forms an integral part' of it (*SC* 112), and thus participates in the liturgy's two functions: giving glory to God and sanctifying the faithful. While different music and songs may be used in different cultures at certain points in the liturgy, the texts of the songs are to be drawn primarily from Scripture and liturgical sources. Instructions for cantors, choirs, and organists are provided in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*.

The public worship of the Church is not limited to celebrations of the seven sacraments and the Liturgy of the Hours. There are liturgical rites composed of the same elements described above for consecrating persons to God, such as the blessing of an abbot or abbess, the consecration of virgins, or the rite of religious profession. There are also rites for the blessing of things, for example, the dedication of a church or an altar, the blessing of holy oils, and the blessing of bells. Funeral rites are also part of the Church's liturgy; these rites 'express the Paschal character of Christian death', and some aspects of these may vary in keeping with local traditions (*CCC* 1685). There are also liturgical rites for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance for the adoration of the faithful.

While the theological meaning of what the Church celebrates in the liturgy has remained constant through the centuries, various traditions, or rites, for how the Church's liturgy is performed have evolved in different cultures at different times in history and are still in use today. The Latin rite includes the Roman rite (the rite used in most places in the West), the Ambrosian rite and rites of certain other local churches, and rites of some religious orders, such as the Dominicans. In addition to the Latin rite, there are also the Byzantine, Alexandrian or Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Maronite, and Chaldean rites.

Further, while they are not classified as rites, there are two additional alternative forms in which the liturgy of the Roman rite may be celebrated. First, after the promulgation of the liturgical rites reformed according to the Second Vatican Council, limited permissions were granted for the continued use of the 1962 preconciliar Missal. In 2007, (p. 273) Pope Benedict authorized broader use of the 1962 Missal and other preconciliar liturgical books, now referred to as the 'Extraordinary Form' of the rite. The second alternative form of the Roman rite is found in liturgical books approved for those coming into the Catholic Church from the Anglican tradition. *Divine Worship: The Missal* (2015) and *Divine Worship: Occasional Services* (2014) contain the rites for Mass, and for baptism, confirmation, marriage, and funerals provided for members of the Ordinariates established as a result of *Anglicanorum Coetibus* (2009).

The second section of this article has described elements of the outward form of the liturgy. Vatican II's *Sacrosanctum Concilium* mandated changes to various aspects of the liturgy's outward form on the basis of its theology of the liturgy. Since the Church continues to assimilate the Council's theological vision, it is helpful to conclude this article by summarizing some of the central insights of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s understanding of the liturgy.

Key Aspects of Vatican II's Theology of the Liturgy

In the centuries immediately preceding the Second Vatican Council, consideration of the Church's liturgy had often been primarily concerned with ceremonies and rubrics. The Liturgical Movement of the twentieth century had helped encourage a renewed appreciation for the theological, spiritual, and pastoral dimensions of the liturgy. When, in *Sacro-*

sanctum Concilium, the bishops called for the renewal and fostering (*instaurandam et fovendam*) of the sacred liturgy, they began by presenting a theology of the nature of the liturgy, and then mandated specific reforms in the way the liturgy was celebrated flowing from that theology.

What are the distinguishing marks of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s theology of the liturgy? In its theological description of the nature of the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* makes use of the language and conceptual world of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church (rather than abstract terminology) to describe what happens in the liturgy. Adopting a scriptural and patristic framework for explaining the liturgy leads to approaching the liturgy from the perspective of its role in the economy of salvation, seeing it as a continuation of God's saving work in the Old and New Testaments. This results in a theology of the liturgy that gives prominence to the Paschal Mystery, which, as the centre of salvation history, is also the centre of the liturgy. Adopting a patristic framework also leads to a renewed attention to the sign character of the sacramental liturgy, and therefore to the liturgical context in which sacramental actions take place (as well as their efficacy).

This theological understanding of the nature of the liturgy as continuation of salvation history, centred on the Paschal Mystery and re-presenting it, is the basis for the affirmation that the liturgy is the 'fount from which all the Church's power flows' and the (p. 274) 'summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed' (*SC* 10). This means that in the desired renewal and fostering of the liturgy, the goal 'to be considered before all else' is the faithful's 'full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations' which is required by the liturgy's very nature (*SC* 14) as source and summit of the Church's life. Similarly, because of the liturgy's importance as 'source and summit', *Sacrosanctum Concilium* reaffirms the teaching of Pius XI that the faithful should not be 'strangers and silent spectators' at the Eucharist, and mandates particular reforms so that the Mass 'even in its ritual forms, may become pastorally effective to the utmost degree (*SC* 49)'. Having laid out the power and beauty of how God acts through the liturgy, the Council Fathers wanted to do everything they could to enable worshippers to experience this spiritually; the reason they give for the reforms is so that the faithful 'may more surely derive an abundance of graces from the liturgy' (*SC* 21).

In addition to these general characteristics of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s theology of the liturgy, there are many particular points of significance for theology, two of which will be mentioned here. First, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* calls attention to the vital role of the Word proclaimed in the liturgy. To the ways Christ is present in the liturgy given in *Mediator Dei* (1947), *Sacrosanctum Concilium* adds that Christ 'is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church' (*SC* 7, see also 33). Therefore, 'Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the liturgy', since all of the liturgy is either from Scripture or related to it in some way, and achieving the desired renewal of the liturgy is dependent on promoting a 'warm and living love for Scripture' (*SC* 24). Because Scripture has such importance, the Council calls for more readings from Scripture in the liturgy, taken from a broader range of biblical books, and selected because they are particularly appropriate to the celebration in which they are

proclaimed (*SC* 35, 51). Also, preaching (mandatory on Sundays and holy days) is to be Scripturally rooted and of high quality (*SC* 35, 52). The Council Fathers simultaneously encourage a deeper appreciation of the role of Scripture in the liturgy, and, with their affirmation that Christ is present in the Word proclaimed, contribute a development of the theology of the liturgy which requires further theological reflection to plumb its full significance.

Second, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* mandates the restoration of the catechumenate for unbaptized adults (*SC* 64). The reformed rite of baptism for adults thus begins with a liturgy admitting converts to the catechumenate long before the final pouring of the water; after admission, converts' time in the catechumenate is 'sanctified by sacred rites to be celebrated at successive intervals of time'. The underlying assumption is that conversion to faith in Jesus Christ in the Church as it develops and matures in the catechumens is, in part, mediated through liturgical rites. The restored catechumenate thus bears witness to *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s insistence that God acts through the liturgy to draw worshippers closer to himself. Further, a key aspect of these rites of the catechumenate is the proclamation of the Word. Since *Sacrosanctum Concilium* affirms that God speaks through his Word and that Christ is present in his Word, the proclamation of the Word in the liturgy is seen as functioning as catalyst for conversion.

(p. 275) The liturgy of the Church, as described in this article, can take many forms, but all of these—whether celebrations of the Eucharist or other sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours, or other rites—have certain common characteristics. The faithful assemble to pray as a community and through their worship, in words and outward signs, the Lord communicates his divine life to the Church community and to each member personally. The Church's liturgy is inseparable from the Church's theology, as illustrated in the following words of theologian Cyprian Vagaggini. After describing the liturgy as a 'concrete actualization through sacred signs of the history of salvation centered on the mystery of Christ present and active in us', he affirms:

> For that is the mystery which the Bible announces, dogma systematically and synthetically presents in its depth, spiritual theology teaches to be lived and pastoral theology transmits to men. If this is true, the liturgy is nothing else than dogma experienced in its most sacred moments, the Bible prayed, the spirituality of the Church in its most characteristic act, the summit and font of pastoral activity
>
> (quoted in Baraùna 1966: 110–111).

Bibliography and Suggested Reading

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The Eucharist

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Abstract and Keywords

The Eucharist is the Church's chief act of worship and pre-eminent means by which the lives of the faithful are sanctified by God's grace. The ritual meals and sacrifices of Israel are the remote origins of the Christian Eucharist, and the proximate origin is Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples. At this meal Jesus associated the bread with his body and the wine with his blood, and he does so in the context of speaking of his death as something he will undergo 'for' his disciples, to establish a covenant with God, thus presenting his death and its Eucharistic commemoration in sacrificial terms reminiscent of Exodus 24:3–8. After a discussion of the development of the Eucharistic liturgy, the essay considers in more detail the Eucharist as a sacrifice in order to put in context Catholic teaching on the real presence of Christ under the forms of bread and wine.

Keywords: Eucharist, transubstantiation, sacrifice, liturgy, body, presence, ritual, body and blood

THE Second Vatican Council describes the liturgy in general, and the Eucharist in particular, as 'the high point towards which the activity of the church is directed, and, simultaneously, the source from which all its power flows out' (*SC* 10 in Tanner 1990: 823). Or, as an old Catholic adage puts it, 'it's the Mass that matters'. Over the course of the centuries, in liturgies ranging from domestic celebrations in Roman homes to battlefield celebrations on the hood of Jeeps, from solemn papal Masses in St Peter's to early-morning Masses said quietly at side altars, the celebration of the Eucharist has been at the centre of Catholic life. It is the Church's chief act of worship and pre-eminent means by which the lives of the faithful are sanctified by God's grace. Given the significance of the Eucharist in Catholic life and thought, what follows is a very selective account of Eucharistic theology and practice. Much more could be and has been said. I hope merely to offer some starting points for further research and reflection.

Eucharistic Origins

The roots of the Eucharist are as old as the practices of dining and of sacrifice. In ancient Israel, both meals and sacrifices were highly ritualized (see Feeley-Harnik 1981: 71–106; Mazza 1999: 9–17; Anderson 1992). The dangers of improper eating are, of course, signalled at the very outset of the book of Genesis, when the single law God gives humanity regards prohibited eating (Gen. 2:17), and when disaster follows on the violation of this prohibition. Likewise, the birth of human violence involves a dispute over whose sacrifice is the preferred one (Gen. 4:3–5). Throughout the Old Testament, we find numerous laws concerning what can be eaten, with whom one can eat, and what is properly offered in sacrifice. The rituals of table and temple served to establish the identity of God's covenant people, marking inclusion and exclusion.

As in other cultures, some of the sacrifices of the Israelites were consummated by a meal in which the flesh of the sacrificed animal was shared (see Lev. 7:11–21), (p. 278) establishing a bond among the offerers and God. Notable among these was the offering of the Passover lamb, which was joined at some point in the history of Israel with the Feast of Unleavened Bread to form the pilgrimage feast of Passover (see Bokser 1992). Passover was not only a 'communion sacrifice' but also a 'memorial sacrifice', intended to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt and to help the Jews in subsequent generations to appropriate and internalize this saving act of God (Exod. 13:9). Furthermore, participation in the Passover served to define the boundaries of the people Israel (Exod. 12:43–45).

If the ritual meals and sacrifices of Israel are the remote origin of the Christian Eucharist, the proximate origin is Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, which the Synoptic Gospels (the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke) present as a Passover meal. But even prior to the Last Supper, meals had played a significant—and rather scandalous—role in Jesus' ministry, particularly his practice of eating with tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:15–17 and parallels). Among these meals, the Last Supper stands out. In this meal, in contrast to other meals during his ministry, Jesus acts as the host. The precise phrasing of Jesus' words regarding the bread and wine is not entirely consistent among the different accounts, which include not only the Synoptic Gospels but also Paul's brief narrative of the Last Supper in 1 Cor. 11:23–26. Because of this, some scholars have argued that the words of Jesus at the supper are a creation of the early Church and not of Jesus himself during his earthly ministry (Crossan 1991: 360–366). But while it may not be possible to reconstruct the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus at the Last Supper, we are warranted—particularly given the witness of Paul—in claiming that Jesus associated the bread with his body and the wine with his blood (see Meier 1995). Moreover, Jesus does so in the context of speaking of his death as something he will undergo 'for' his disciples, to establish a covenant with God, thus presenting his death and its Eucharistic commemoration in sacrificial terms reminiscent of Exod. 24:3–8. Though only Luke and Paul have Jesus' command that his disciples continue to do this for his remembrance, there is no compelling reason to doubt that it is Jesus' words and actions at the Last Supper that are the origin of the Christian Eucharist (for a discussion of the narratives, see Bradshaw 2004: 1–23).

John's account of the Last Supper makes no mention of Jesus' words about the bread and the wine. In this Gospel, Jesus' teaching concerning the Eucharist occurs not at the Last Supper, but in the so-called 'Bread of life discourse' following Jesus' feeding of the multitude. Though some scholars have denied that the bread of life spoken of here has any reference to the Eucharist, Catholic exegetes have on the whole seen at least John 6:48–58 as Eucharistic. In the resurrection accounts in the Gospels of Luke and John, the risen Jesus appears to his disciples in a meal context (Luke 24:41–43; John 21:9–13). Particularly noteworthy is the supper with the two disciples at Emmaus, which Luke describes in terms strongly reminiscent of his account of the Last Supper (Luke 24:30). The Eucharistic echoes of these resurrection appearances indicate that Jesus' disciples associated the Eucharist not simply with the memory of the Last Supper, but also with their experience of the presence of the risen Lord.

(p. 279) Historical Development of Eucharistic Practice

Paul gives us not only one of our four accounts of Jesus' institution of the Eucharist but also our earliest glimpse of Christian Eucharistic practice. Paul's remarks make clear that the Eucharist is still closely associated with a full meal, though he also makes clear that this aspect of the Lord's Supper is already an occasion for difficulties, particularly the divisions between rich and poor within the Church in Corinth that manifest themselves at the Eucharistic meal (1 Cor. 11:17–18). In light of these difficulties, Paul does two things. First, he reminds the Corinthian Christians of Christ's institution of the Eucharist on the night before he died, and tells them that when they share in the Eucharist, they 'proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1 Cor. 11:26). The Eucharist is not simply a festive meal, but a proclamation of Christ's saving death; it is, as he says earlier, a 'sharing' (*koinonia*) in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16). Second, he warns them to examine themselves and not to partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily, lest they become weak or ill or even die (1 Cor. 11:27–30). To receive the Eucharist worthily, one must 'discern the body' (1 Cor. 11:29)—that is, recognize the bread and wine as a sharing in Christ's body and blood, as well as recognize the Church assembly as Christ's body, a theme he goes on to develop in the next chapter (1 Cor. 12:12–31).

It was perhaps because of such difficulties in maintaining decorum that the Eucharist celebrated with bread and wine gradually separated itself from the full communal meal. The *Didache*, parts of which may date from as early as the later first century AD, gives prayers for the Eucharist (chs. 9–10) that in many ways closely resemble Jewish meal prayers (for texts of Jewish prayers as well as those of the *Didache*, see Jasper and Cumming 1980: 7–12, 20–24; for discussion, see Bradshaw 2004: 32–35, Mazza, 29–34). *Didache*, ch. 14, like Paul, warns against unworthy participation in the Eucharist, specifically participation when one is at odds with another member of the community. It also connects the celebration of the Eucharist to 'the Lord's Day' (i.e. Sunday), a connection already alluded to in the Book of Acts (Acts 20:7). This connection is also made in the mid-

dle of the second century by Justin Martyr, who gives us our first real description of a celebration, one that resembles in broad outline the liturgical pattern that remains normative to this day: reading from ‘the records of the apostles or the writings of the prophets’; a ‘discourse’ in which the one presiding ‘admonishes and exhorts’ the assembly; common prayers for the Church and for the world; the presentation of bread and wine; ‘prayers and thanksgiving’ by the presider to which the congregation responds ‘Amen’; and finally the distribution of communion to those present (*First Apology* 67 in Jasper and Cumming 1980: 29–30). He also explains to his pagan audience that Christians ‘do not receive these things as common bread or common drink’ but as ‘the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus’ (*First Apology* 66 in Jasper and Cumming 1980: 29).

(p. 280) With the Edict of Toleration in the early fourth century, the celebration of the Eucharist began to develop ritually as an act of civic worship. The ritual use of lights and incense and processions became common, and the liturgy was celebrated in splendidly decorated basilicas. In part this was simply a matter of the Church giving ritual expression to the significance of its central act of worship. In another sense, however, the increasing splendour of the eucharistic liturgy served to provide a spectacle for the masses of humanity who were entering the Church, acting as a counter-spectacle to those of pagan culture. By the use of awe-inspiring symbols, the liturgy would serve to shape the thoughts and emotions of the congregation, to impress upon them the power of God and the mercy offered in Christ.

Along with this awe-inspiring ritual, preachers, perhaps mindful of Paul’s remarks about unworthy reception, sought to convey to their congregations a sense of the seriousness with which one ought to approach the Lord’s table. Rather than encouraging greater holiness, however, this seems to have had the effect of discouraging people from receiving communion at all. Beginning first in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire and then spreading through Gaul, and arriving finally in Rome, the practice of infrequent reception of communion by the laity became the near-universal norm by the sixth century, with a legislatively enforced minimum of three times a year the best that could be achieved in most times and places prior to the twentieth century (Jungmann 1951 vol. 2: 359–367).

From the sixth century (and possibly earlier) the rite of Mass as celebrated in the city of Rome took on a fairly definitive shape and began to spread throughout the Western half of Europe, pushing out local liturgical usages. This development was furthered in the eighth century by Charlemagne’s love for all things Roman, including Roman liturgy. By the end of the first millennium the liturgy of Rome was, with a few exceptions in northern Italy and Spain, *the* liturgy of Western Christendom. As the Roman liturgy spread through Europe, local vernacular languages were developing. Yet the liturgy remained in Latin, the language of literacy, which assured the stability and orthodoxy of the rite, but also made its words—if not the broad outline of its meaning—increasingly unintelligible to most lay worshippers (Jungmann 1951: 81). Despite this, recent historical investigations have brought forth examples of a high level of lay comprehension of and engagement in the eucharistic liturgy during the Middle Ages (see for example, Duffy 1992: 91–130).

The Eucharist

The ninth century initiated several centuries of debate in the West over the nature of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, culminating in the eleventh century in the controversy over Berengar of Tours's eucharistic theology and the employment of the term 'transubstantiation' to speak of the change undergone by the eucharistic elements. Later in the Middle Ages, the practice of 'private Masses' for the specific intentions of the living and the dead, which had existed since the early centuries of the Church, greatly increased in frequency, leading to the development of the 'low Mass', a highly simplified form of ritual involving no music and a single assisting minister. Offerings were made by the laity to have Masses said for specific purposes and by the late Middle Ages there were many 'Mass priests,' often poorly educated and having few if any other pastoral duties, (p. 281) who lived off such offerings (see Jungmann 1951: vol. 1, 130–131). The focus of lay eucharistic devotion came increasingly to be the adoration of the eucharistic species, initially at the consecration during Mass, but eventually outside Mass in rites of eucharistic exposition (Jungmann 1951: vol. 1, 119–123).

In the sixteenth century serious theological disagreement over eucharistic faith and practice would again develop. In response to Protestant criticisms the Council of Trent (1546-1563) reaffirmed that transubstantiation was the 'most apt' (*aptissime*) term for the eucharistic change (*On the Eucharist*, canon 2; in Tanner, 697) and also that the Mass was a sacrifice in which 'the very Christ is contained and offered in a bloodless manner who made a bloody sacrifice of himself once for all on the cross' (*On the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, 2; Tanner, 733). Following the Council of Trent, the rite of Mass was reformed, primarily to trim excrescences that had developed over the centuries and to bring various usages into conformity with Roman practice (see Jungmann 1951: 135–140). This began an era of uniformity as a liturgical ideal and a conception of liturgy as timeless and unchanging.

At the same time, eucharistic devotion flourished in the centuries after Trent, becoming something of a badge of identity for Catholics. In the post-Tridentine Church, exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament became a more 'popular' form of worship than the Mass itself, with congregational singing in Latin and the vernacular, and an affective dimension that was more muted in the Mass. In this same period there were movements towards more frequent communion by the laity, though this usually took place outside the celebration of Mass itself, as an act of devotion rather than part of the liturgy (Jungmann 1951: vol. 1, 148). In the seventeenth century frequent communion was particularly encouraged by the Jesuits and opposed by the Jansenists, who feared a slackening of penitential rigour.

In the middle of the nineteenth century there was a reaction against what might be termed 'devotional Catholicism'—focused on novenas, eucharistic adoration, and the rosary—and a call to return to the liturgy as the primary wellspring of Catholic spiritual life. This nascent 'Liturgical Movement' received a boost from Pope Pius X in his 1903 instruction *Tra le Sollecitudini*, which encouraged vocal participation of the congregation in singing the chants of the Mass, and in the 1910 text *Quam Singulari*, which lowered the age for First Communion to the age of reason (around seven years of age) as a way of

helping the faithful develop habits of more frequent sacramental participation in the Mass. Robert Taft has called this latter initiative, ‘the greatest and most successful liturgical reform in Catholic history’ (Taft 1997: 105). In addition to encouraging more frequent communion, the advocates of the Liturgical Movement sought to foster a piety based on the liturgy through deeper and more active engagement with the liturgical action on the part of lay people. They did not, initially, seek any reforms in the Mass itself. After the Second World War, however, calls for reform of the texts and rites began to be heard, and the reform of Holy Week in the 1950s was a sign that such calls were not going unheard in Rome.

Along with a renewal of liturgical life, there was a rethinking of the theology of the Eucharist. In seeking to focus lay piety on the liturgy, the Liturgical Movement began (p. 282) to blur the sharp line that was sometimes drawn separating the clergy from the laity. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the most ancient prayers of the Mass were in the first person plural: they were said by the priest on behalf of the people in the offering of the sacrifice of the whole Church. Receiving communion was seen not so much as a devotional act, but as the congregation’s way of sharing in the sacrifice. On the theological front, some theologians even began questioning whether ‘transubstantiation’ was still, as Trent had claimed, the ‘most apt’ way of speaking of what happens to the bread and wine in the Eucharist, and proposed new accounts focused not on metaphysics, but on meaning (transignification) or purpose (transfinalization).

In the 1960s, the reform of the eucharistic liturgy was called for by the Second Vatican Council and carried out by a *Concilium* that was set up to reform the rites of the Church. These reforms were more far-reaching than anyone would have expected even in the 1950s. Most striking was the permission for use of the vernacular. Other changes were also noteworthy, including the widespread practice of the priest celebrating Mass facing the people and the offering of communion from the chalice to the laity (a practice that had disappeared in the Middle Ages), both of which seemed to underscore the idea of the Mass as a sacred meal. On the theological front, however, the more daring speculations regarding the Eucharist met with a chillier official reception. In his 1965 encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* Pope Paul VI condemned ‘false and disturbing opinions’ concerning the Eucharist and explicitly rejected ‘transignification’ and ‘transfinalization’ as adequate accounts of the eucharistic mystery (chp. 11) and reaffirmed the language of ‘transubstantiation’ (chp. 46). This did not, of course, end theological speculation.

The decades since the Council have been turbulent. Though this seems to be a fairly normal historical pattern, knowing this does not mitigate the nausea induced by the turbulence. In hindsight, the reforms initiated by the *Concilium* were carried out with some haste and, though often greeted by both clergy and laity with enthusiasm, imposed in a fairly authoritarian manner. The Eucharist has, as we have seen, always been subject to historical development, both ritually and theologically, but this has, on the whole, taken place quite gradually. In comparison, the changes after Vatican II seemed to some like a complete upheaval in the ritual life of the Church. In the post-Conciliar period there have been partisans on both the left (advocating greater and more radical reforms) and the

right (rejecting the reforms entirely and calling for a return to the pre-Conciliar Mass in Latin), but most Catholics have found themselves somewhere in the middle. While they are happy about many of the specific changes, particularly the introduction of the vernacular, many are also showing a renewed interest in practices such as eucharistic adoration and prayer forms such as chant.

That the eucharistic liturgy would be a scene of conflict should come as no surprise to anyone who has read Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Today, questions of inclusion and exclusion, worthy reception, and discerning the body remain as much as they did in Paul's day. What also remains, despite the ebb and flow of history, is the Eucharist as a practice in which Christians proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes and by which they are made into the holy people of God.

(p. 283) The Shape of the Liturgy

The Eucharist is not fundamentally a 'thing' (the consecrated species) or a set of words (the texts of the Mass), but a set of actions, including speech acts, that have a distinctive shape. The fundamental shape of the celebration of the Mass is twofold: a liturgy of reading, instruction, and prayer—the Liturgy of the Word; and a liturgy of praying and giving thanks over bread and wine and sharing Christ's body and blood in Holy Communion—the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As we have seen, this structure is in broad outline identical to that described by Justin Martyr in the second century. To these two fundamental units are appended an introductory rite of praise and penitence and a brief concluding rite, in which the congregation is sent forth.

The introduction of the modern Roman rite of Mass is relatively brief, consisting of acts of penitence and praise that are intended, 'to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily' (GIRM 46). In the Liturgy of the Word, 'the table of God's Word is spread before the faithful, and the treasures of the Bible are opened to them' (GIRM 57). The language of 'the table of God's Word' is intended to draw a parallel with the table of the Eucharist, indicating that there is a 'real' (albeit not 'substantial') presence of Christ in the proclaimed Scripture no less than in the consecrated bread and wine. After two or three Scripture readings, the last of which is always from one of the Gospels, the homily is intended to be an exposition of the readings or some other text from the Mass. Just as the bread of the Eucharist is broken for communion, so, too, the bread of God's word is 'broken open' in the homily, so as to nourish the faithful. Then, the word having been proclaimed, the faithful respond to that proclamation with, on Sundays, the Nicene Creed and the Prayer of the Faithful, in which the faithful, 'exercising the office of their baptismal Priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all' (GIRM 69).

The Liturgy of the Eucharist has two major elements: the Eucharistic Prayer or *Anaphora*, in which God's saving actions are recalled and the gifts are consecrated and offered; and the Communion rite, in which the consecrated eucharistic gifts are received by the faithful. Prior to the Eucharistic Prayer the gifts of bread and wine are prepared and placed

on the altar, typically with representatives of the faithful presenting the bread and wine as signs of their life and labour. The Eucharistic Prayer itself is ‘the center and highpoint of the entire celebration’, and is offered by the priest ‘in the name of the entire community to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit’. In the prayer, ‘the whole congregation of the faithful joins with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice’ (GIRM 78). These two elements—confessing God’s deeds and asking God to receive the sacrifice—form the fundamental structure of the Eucharistic Prayer: thanksgiving and petition. First, thanks are offered in remembrance of what God has done for the world’s salvation. In the Roman rite, this occurs principally in the ‘Preface’ of the Eucharistic Prayer, which culminates with the Church on earth uniting with the Church in heaven to sing the *Sanctus*, the song of the angels. Then the (p. 284) Church asks God to receive the sacrifice that she offers in remembrance of Christ, and to send the Spirit to unite the Church through the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice. As a sort of ‘hinge’ between these two sections (or, in the ancient Roman Canon, now called Eucharistic Prayer 1, in the midst of the petitionary section) comes the narrative of the Last Supper, the consecration in which ‘that Sacrifice is effected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper’ (GIRM 79). The prayer concludes with a doxology praising the Triune God, to which the people reply ‘Amen’, giving their assent to the prayer the priest has prayed in their name.

The Communion rite begins with the Lord’s Prayer, which has ancient associations with the reception of communion, due to its petition, ‘give us this day our daily bread’. The mutual forgiveness for which the Our Father prays is ritualized in the exchange of peace through some appropriate gesture, by which all present signify ‘their ecclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament’ (GIRM 82). While the *Agnus Dei* is sung the consecrated bread is ritually broken—an act that underscores the symbolic (if not actual) sharing in one bread by which those who receive become one body (see 1 Cor. 10:16–17). The communion of the priest and people is the complement to the Eucharistic Prayer, a second ritual peak in which, as in the ancient communion sacrifice, the gifts that have been offered are shared, establishing the *koinonia* of the faithful in the ecclesial and eucharistic body of Christ. Communion is concluded with a period of silence followed by a brief prayer that typically asks that the sacrament would bear fruit in the lives of those who receive it.

The Roman rite concludes quickly, almost abruptly, with a blessing and dismissal. The liturgy, however, is continued by the faithful as they live their daily lives strengthened by the grace of the Eucharist. This is underscored by a recently authorized alternative text for the dismissal: ‘Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life’.

The Eucharist as Sacrifice

Having described the Eucharistic action and seeking to make ritual sense of it, we may now turn to the theological understanding of this sacrament. The early Christians stressed the ‘bloodless’ nature of their worship, yet also quite naturally spoke of their Eu-

charist as a sacrifice because it followed the pattern of the communion sacrifice: gifts are offered to God, consecrated by prayer, and then received back by the offerers for their consumption. Furthermore, the origin of the Eucharist in the Last Supper established at the outset the sacrificial context of Passover as key to understanding the Christian Eucharist. We find sacrificial language in connection with the Eucharist in the *Didache*, which paraphrases Mal. 1:11—'from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering' (*Didache* 14; Jasper 1980: 24). This text from Malachi appears with some frequency in early Christian eucharistic texts, presenting the Eucharist as the perfection and (p. 285) fulfilment of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. Justin Martyr speaks of the Eucharist as the sacrifice that Jesus 'commanded to be offered… whereby the passion which the Son of God endured for us is commemorated' (*Dialogue with Trypho* 117; Palmer 1955: 183). Irenaeus associates the Eucharist with the offering of first fruits, calling it 'a new oblation of the New Testament' (*Against Heresies* 4.17.5; Palmer 1955: 184). How this Christian eucharistic sacrifice was related to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross of which it was the commemoration—i.e. is it a sacrifice in *addition* to the one it commemorates?—was not yet a topic of explicit reflection.

By the early fifth century, John Chrysostom is careful to note the unity of the many Eucharists with the one sacrifice of Christ: 'This [our offering] is a symbol of that [His offering]; this [our sacrifice] a symbol of that'. The unity of Eucharist and cross is secured by the singleness of that which is offered: 'for we offer the same person, not today one sheep and tomorrow another, but the same offering. … So we offer now that which was then offered, and which cannot be exhausted' (*Commentary on Hebrews* 17.3; Palmer 1955: 188–189). Augustine calls the Eucharist the 'daily sacrament' of Christ's self-offering to the Father, through which Christ's body the Church participates in that self-offering (*The City of God* 10.20). As to the purpose of this sacrifice, Augustine and other Patristic writers testify the practice of celebrating the Eucharist for the benefit of specific people, particularly the deceased (see *Confessions* 9.11.27; see also Tertullian, *On the Crown* 3). Cyril of Jerusalem, speaking of the intercessions for the dead made in the *anaphora*, notes, 'we believe that those souls will receive most help for whom prayer is made in the presence of the holy and most awesome sacrifice' (*On the Mysteries* 5.9; Wiles and Santer, 192).

In the Middle Ages, the theology of eucharistic sacrifice was somewhat slow in developing, taking second place to the controversies over eucharistic presence engendered by Berengar. By the end of the fifteenth century theologians had not moved much beyond the rather austere twelfth-century teaching of Peter Lombard, which in itself was not much different from Chrysostom's in the fifth century:

> Christ died once, upon the cross, and there he was immolated in his own self; and yet every day he is immolated sacramentally, because in the sacrament there is a recalling of what was once done. … the same reality, remaining always the same, is offered, and so this is the same sacrifice
>
> (*Sentences*, d. 12, ch. 5; Clark 1960: 74–81).

However the increase in ‘private’ Masses offered for the intentions of specific people began to raise questions about how the fruits of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross were ‘applied’ by such Masses.

It was only in the wake of the Protestant Reformation that more detailed theologies of eucharistic sacrifice began to be developed. At the time of the Reformation there was a consensus among theologians of various schools on the following points: the Mass is a true and not simply metaphorical sacrifice; the sacrifice of the Mass in no way derogates from the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross because it is from the cross that the Mass derives its efficacy; the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the altar (p. 286) are one because in both Christ is the one who offers and the one who is offered; the Mass involves in no way a ‘reslaying’ of Christ; and the sacrifice of the Mass can benefit both the living and the dead (see Clark 1960: 73–98). The Council of Trent did little more than reaffirm this consensus and the practices associated with it (especially ‘private’ Masses), stating that the Mass was instituted by Christ in order that the sacrifice of the cross, ‘should be represented, its memory persist until the end of time, and its saving power be applied to the forgiveness of sins which we commit daily’ (*On the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* 1; Tanner 1990: 733), and sought to avoid taking sides on disputed questions within the Church between Thomists, Scotists, and Nominalists (see Power 1987: 94–133).

In the post-Tridentine period theologians sought to articulate more precisely what the Council meant by calling the Mass ‘a true and proper sacrifice’ (*On the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, canon 1: Tanner, 735). This led theologians to seek a general definition of sacrifice into which the Eucharist could fit. Turning to Thomas Aquinas, they found that he included as a distinguishing mark of sacrifice, as opposed to other sorts of offerings, that ‘something be done to the thing which is offered to God, for instance animals were slain and burnt, or the bread is broken, eaten, and blessed’ (*ST* II–IIae, q. 85, a.3 *ad* 3). Robert Bellarmine interpreted this ‘something’ that is done to be the destruction of the victim; thus, if the Eucharist is ‘a true and proper sacrifice’ then it must involve a destruction of the offering, which he identified with the priest’s consumption of the eucharistic species. John de Lugo took Bellarmine’s position one step further, arguing for a ‘quasi-destruction’ involved in Christ subjecting himself to the limitations imposed by his sacramental mode of presence (see Clark 1960: 439–456).

Though these theologians were careful to state that there was no *real* destruction of Christ involved in the Mass, their views prompted a reaction among later theologians who saw that in their zeal to find a generic definition of sacrifice into which the Eucharist could fit, these so-called ‘destruction theories’ seemed to miss the properly *sacramental* nature of the eucharistic sacrifice. As a sacrament, the Eucharist is a kind of sign—in this case, a sign of Christ’s sacrifice—but not in such a way as to make it a merely symbolic sacrifice and not a true and proper one. Yet its identity as a sacrifice comes not from conforming to a generic definition of sacrifice, but from its being the sacramental sign of the one sacrifice of Christ. As such, it cannot be a sacrifice offered ‘in addition’ to the sacri-

fice of the cross, as Protestants accused Catholics of maintaining. As Anscar Vonier put it in 1925:

> A sacrament is not an act in the drama, however great that drama may be; a sacrament is essentially a representation of the whole drama. … Sacraments are the monuments of the finished thing, not the introductory scenes or the last acts in some great historic deed
>
> (Vonier 2003: 90).

This general view, though not all its details, was echoed by such other theologians as Maurice de la Taille, Odo Casel, and Charles Journet, all of whom present the Eucharist (p. 287) as a sacramental sacrifice in which the cross of Christ is 'represented'. In the 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*, Pope Pius XII seemed to endorse this view, speaking of the Eucharistic consecration as the 'commemorative representation' of Christ's death. Moreover, he associates this representation with the transubstantiation of the eucharistic elements, in which the separate consecrations of the bread and of the wine 'symbolize the actual separation of His body and blood' (70). This commemorative representation is not simply a subjective calling to mind, but an objective action of Christ in his role as eternal priest.

The understanding of the Eucharist as a sacramental sacrifice has commanded wide assent, though it has not gone entirely uncriticized. Edward Kilmartin speaks of what he calls the 'modern average Catholic theology of eucharistic sacrifice' and pronounces it 'a weak synthesis without a future' (1998: 365). Kilmartin's criticisms are numerous, but chief among them is the lack of integration between the eucharistic sacrifice and the reception of communion by the assembly. This lack of integration reflects, 'a defective interpretation of the relationship between the Christian assembly and the presiding minister' (365), which leads to an understanding of eucharistic agency that is too exclusively Christological and insufficiently ecclesiological and pneumatological (368). In its concern to stress the objectivity of Christ's representation in the Eucharist, the sacramental sacrifice approach has, according to Kilmartin, disastrously underplayed the role of the celebrating assembly in the eucharistic action.

Kilmartin's critique of this 'modern average Catholic theology of Eucharistic sacrifice' is fairly comprehensive, leaving one with the impression that the Catholic tradition has for centuries been wandering completely astray with regards to eucharistic sacrifice. One need not agree with this comprehensive judgement, however, in order to see the justice of some of his claims. In particular, if the Eucharist is thought of in terms of a communion sacrifice, in which the sacrificial act itself involves the offerers feasting with each other and feasting with God, then one ought not to isolate the reception of communion from the essence of the sacramental sacrifice (which, perhaps surprisingly, suggests a possible return to Bellarmine's theology of eucharistic sacrifice). Moreover, a strong Christological affirmation that it is Christ who is the one who offers the Eucharist should not prevent us from also affirming that the Church, as the body joined to Christ the head, has a role in offering not only Christ, but herself. Indeed, just this view finds liturgical expression in

the second epiclesis (invocation of the Holy Spirit) of the Eucharistic Prayer: ‘grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ. May he make of us an eternal offering to you, so that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect’ (Eucharistic Prayer III). Here we find no need to pit Christology, ecclesiology, and pneumatology against one another; rather the eucharistic communion is linked to the self-gift of Christ and his ecclesial body by means of the Spirit. There seems no particular reason why these insights could not be integrated into an understanding of the Eucharist as a sacramental sacrifice in which Christ, through the Spirit, is the principal agent.

(p. 288) The Eucharist and Christ’s Presence

I have spent a considerable amount of time examining the Eucharist as a sacrifice, postponing what many would assume is the real heart of the Catholic theology of the Eucharist: the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine. Yet we are liable to misunderstand the eucharistic presence of Christ if we do not see it in the context of the sacramental representation of his cross. The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is not a datum in addition to the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist; rather, Christ is present in the Eucharist precisely in his identity as the one who gives himself to the Father and, thereby, gives himself to us.

We have already seen that Paul spoke of the broken bread and the blessed cup as a ‘sharing’ in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16), as well as the highly realistic language of John’s Gospel regarding eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking his blood (John 6:53). I have also mentioned the testimony of Justin Martyr from the mid second century regarding the Eucharist, which includes this explanation:

> We do not receive things as common bread or common drink; but just as our Saviour Jesus Christ, being incarnate through the word of God, took flesh and blood for our salvation, so too we have been taught that the food over which thanks have been given by a word of prayer which is from him (the food) from which our flesh and blood are fed by transformation, is both the flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus
>
> (*First Apology* 66; Jasper and Cumming 1980: 29).

Justin gives early testimony to what can only be called a ‘realist’ understanding of Christ’s presence in which it is the humanity of the incarnate word that is eaten in the Eucharist.

In the fourth century we find something of a modulation of realism of earlier writers through the use of the language of the bread and wine as ‘figures’ (*typoi*) of Christ’s body and blood, perhaps as a way of acknowledging that the elements do not have the appearance of flesh and blood. Thus Cyril of Jerusalem tells the newly baptized, ‘in the figure of bread it is his body that is given to you and in the figure of wine it is his blood’ (*On the*

Mysteries 4. 3; Wiles and Santer 1975: 188). Yet Cyril's use of figural language does not prevent him from going on to say, 'that which appears to be bread is not bread even though it seems so to the taste, but the body of Christ' (*Mystagogical Catecheses* 4.9; Wiles and Santer 1975: 190). As Paul Bradshaw notes, for these authors figural and symbolic realities were not sharply distinguished from that which they figured and symbolized (Bradshaw 2004: 155).

In the West this typological language only begins to become problematic in the ninth century. Paschasius Radbertus (785-865) and Ratramnus (d. c.870) articulated positions that might respectively be described as 'realist', stressing the identity of Christ's sacramental presence with his natural body, and 'symbolist' or 'figural', stressing the distinction between the sign and the reality (see Mazza, 183–187). A form of this latter view was developed by Berengar of Tours in the eleventh century, occasioning a theological (p. 289) controversy that would deeply mark Western eucharistic theology. It is difficult to discern the precise nature of Berengar's views, not least because he seems to say contradictory things, but he was certainly understood by his contemporaries to be saying that Christ's presence was not 'real'; Christ was present only in our faith and understanding (see Mazza 1999: 190–192). Lanfranc of Canterbury quotes Berengar as saying that in calling the bread and wine 'likeness, figure, sign, mystery, sacrament' we use 'relative terms' that imply a relationship between bread and body. Berengar continues, 'But surely that which is related to something else cannot be that to which it is related. It is not then the body of Christ' (*On the Body and Blood of the Lord* 20; Palmer 1955: 155).

Berengar was made to sign two oaths, one in 1059 and one in 1079, both of which he would recant shortly after signing them. The first was strongly realist in character, to the point of saying that Christ's body and blood are 'touched and broken by the hands of the priests and ground by the teeth of the faithful' (DH 690). Here, the sacramental presence of Christ is seemingly collapsed into a purely natural presence. The second oath was more nuanced, saying that Christ's body and blood is present 'in its true nature and in the truth of its substance' (DH 700). This formulation would prove significant in employing the term 'substance' to speak of the nature of Christ's presence. Though there was initially much confusion as to exactly what was meant by the term, it proved useful enough in ensuing decades that the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) employed the term 'transubstantiation' (change of substance) to speak of bread and wine becoming Christ's body and blood.

The term 'transubstantiation' has become such a marker of Catholic eucharistic theology that is it difficult for some to imagine how the Church survived for over a thousand years without it. Others see in this term the downfall of true eucharistic theology, due to the importation of rationalist Aristotelian categories of 'substance' and 'accident'. In reality, the origin of the term has little to do with Aristotle, since the term arises well before most of Aristotle's texts were available in the West. Furthermore, the dogmatic formulations of the Council of Trent seek to avoid wedding the word to an Aristotelian natural philosophy even if, as Edward Schillibeeckx argued, the Council fathers themselves did think in those terms (see Schillibeeckx 1968: 54–57). As Karl Rahner puts it, the doctrine of transub-

stantiation, ‘intends to say exactly what Christ says: that what he gives is his body and no longer bread… [It] tells me no more than do the words of Christ, when I take them seriously’ (1982: 302). In other words, the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist is that the proper answer to the question ‘what is it?’ asked with regard to the consecrated elements of the Eucharist, is ‘the body of Christ’ and ‘Christ’s blood of the new covenant’. The Church has deemed it appropriate to speak of this in terms of a change of substance, since, according to Aristotle, ‘substance’ is whatever answers the question ‘what is it?’.

The other side to the doctrine of transubstantiation is the claim that the appearances—i.e. the ‘accidents’ or ‘species’—of the bread and wine remain. This is sometimes understood as if Christ had put on a disguise, bread and wine, which might be whipped off at any moment to reveal his true identity. The appearances of bread and wine, however, remain essential to the sacramental reality of Christ’s presence, since it is these, (p. 290) as sacramental signs (*sacramentum tantum*) that mediate the sacramental reality (*res et sacramentum*) of Christ’s presence. They are the full empirical, physical reality of bread and wine, not simply a set of sense impressions that God miraculously maintains. One might subject the consecrated Eucharist to any sort of scientific analysis and nothing will be discovered except bread and wine. This is why Thomas Aquinas is careful to explain that the Eucharist involves no ‘natural’ change in the bread and wine—i.e. one that the senses could detect (*ST* III, q.75, a.8). Christ’s eucharistic presence is not an empirical reality but a mystery of faith. It is, as Trent puts it, ‘a mode of existing which, though we can hardly express it in words, we can grasp with minds enlightened by faith as possible to God’ (*On the Eucharist* 1; Tanner 1990: 694).

Though the doctrine of transubstantiation articulates the Catholic belief that the bread and wine, when consecrated, become the body and blood of Christ, it does not really address the question of why Christians would want to eat Christ’s body and blood in the first place. It is here that it is helpful to recall that the Eucharist is a sacramental sacrifice—one that involves the consumption of the sacrificial victim. Thus there is a certain logic that it would involve the consumption of Christ’s flesh. At the same time, this language of eating Christ’s body and drinking his blood was, from the outset, highly offensive (see John 6:66). But what must be remembered is that Christians do not consume Christ in quite the same way that one would eat the dead flesh of an animal offered in sacrifice; rather, it is the living Christ, who has triumphed over death, who gives himself to his disciples to allow them to share in his victory. As Gregory of Nyssa wrote in the fourth century, ‘the entry of the immortal body into the body that receives it transforms it in its entirety into its own immortal nature’ (*Catechetical Oration* 37; Wiles and Santer 1975: 194).

Thus, we are nourished by the body and blood of the one who offers himself to God by offering himself to us. The fourteenth-century writer Julian of Norwich uses the striking image of Christ as mother, which she explicates in terms of the Eucharist: ‘The mother can give her child her milk to suck, but our dear mother Jesus can feed us with himself, and he does so most generously and most tenderly with the holy sacrament which is the precious food of life itself’ (1998: 141). Here Julian presents our eucharistic feeding on

Christ not as some form of ritual cannibalism, but as the mother's sacrificial self gift, in which she feeds her child out of her very bodily substance. Though perhaps startling to us today, the image is not without precedent in such early Christian writers as Clement of Alexandria (*The Instructor* 6), Macarius Magnes (*The Apocriticus* 3.8), the Syrian poet Narsai (*Homily* 21), and possibly even Augustine (*Confessions* 6.1.1. see Englebrecht 1999). Such imagery presses us to realize that while the Eucharist may be a communion sacrifice, it is a very peculiar sort of communion sacrifice, in which we feast not on the flesh of a slaughtered animal, but on the living body of the Risen One, who gives himself for us and to us in an act of supreme generosity and, in so doing, engenders reciprocal generosity in us. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote in his encyclical *Deus caritas est*: 'The Eucharist draws us into Jesus's act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving' (13).

The Eucharist and the Church

Those who share in the communion sacrifice of the Eucharist, who are fed by Christ with his body and blood, are united with Christ and with each other. The connection between the Eucharist and the Church is evident in Paul's statement that those who share the one bread become one body (1 Cor. 10:17), a sentiment echoed in one of the Eucharistic Prayers of the Mass: 'grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ' (Eucharistic Prayer III).

Among the early Christian Fathers, John Chrysostom and Augustine offered particularly striking reflections on the ecclesial dimension of the Eucharist. Chrysostom writes, 'What is the bread? The body of Christ. What do those who receive a share of it become? The body of Christ—not many bodies, but one body' (*Homilies on 1 Corinthians* 24.2; Wiles and Santer 1975: 197). The eucharistic body makes the ecclesial body. Likewise, Augustine preaches to the newly baptized:

> If you are the body of Christ and his members it is the mystery of yourselves that is placed on the Lord's table; it is the mystery of yourselves that you receive. It is to what you are that you make the response 'Amen', and in making that response you give your personal assent. You hear 'the body of Christ' and you answer 'Amen'. Be a member of Christ's body and make your 'Amen' true
>
> (*Sermon* 272; Wiles and Santer 1975: 200).

In Augustine, the emphasis of Chrysostom is reversed: here what is stressed is that it is the identity of the Church as Christ's body that makes authentic the communicant's 'Amen' to the eucharistic body. The ecclesial body makes the eucharistic body.

This ecclesial dimension of the Eucharist remained present in the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas held that the ultimate reality (*res tantum*) signified and brought about by the Eucharist was 'the unity of the mystical body, that is, the Church' (*De articulus fidei et eccle-*

siae sacramentis 2.2). But, as Henri de Lubac argued, increasing emphasis began to be placed to the reality of Christ's eucharistic presence under the appearances of bread and wine in the wake of the controversies over Berengar's eucharistic theology, with a consequent diminishment of the ecclesial dimension of the Eucharist (de Lubac 2006: 75–100). What needed to be recovered was the early Christian sense that, as de Lubac put it in a now-classic formulation, 'the Eucharist makes the Church' (de Lubac 2006: 88); in other words, 'the Church and the Eucharist are formed by one another day by day: the idea of the Church and the idea of the Eucharist must promote one another mutually and each be rendered more profound by the other' (de Lubac 2006: 260). As in ancient Israel, the Eucharist as a ritual of table and temple—a ritual in which the table *becomes* the temple—defines the identity of God's people.

(p. 292) Partly as a result of the scholarly efforts of de Lubac and others, in the twentieth century there was a recovery of this dimension of eucharistic theology. It was this sense of the Eucharist as, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, 'a sacrament of faithful relationships, a sign of unity, a bond of divine love, a paschal feast' (*SC* 47; Tanner, 830), that undergirded the call for liturgical reforms to support a deeper engagement with and active participation in the Eucharist by the whole ecclesial body. For if it is pre-eminently in the Eucharist that the Church attains and expresses its identity, then it is vital that the celebration be one that reflects and realizes the Scriptural truth that *all* who partake of the one bread are members of Christ's body.

As noted at the outset, much more could be said, since the richness of the Church's eucharistic tradition and the controversies it has engendered can only be hinted at in this brief essay. But perhaps the inadequacy of this essay itself speaks of the Eucharist in a way that reminds us that this is a mystery before which all human language fails, because it is the mystery of divine love. As the *cherubikon* of the Liturgy of Saint James puts it:

> Let all mortal flesh be silent, and stand with fear and trembling, and meditate nothing earthly within itself.
>
> For the King of kings and Lord of lords, Christ our God, comes forward to be sacrificed, and to be given for food to the faithful.
>
> And the bands of angels go before Him with every power and dominion, the many-eyed cherubim, and the six-winged seraphim, covering their faces, and crying aloud the hymn, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Suggested Reading

On the subject of this chapter see also *CCC* 1322-1419.

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Holy Orders

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the Roman Catholic vision of ordained ministry. It takes a broadly historical approach, showing how conceptions of the ministry of bishop, priest, and deacon gradually emerged in the first few centuries of the Church, and how those conceptions evolved. It traces the development of a Eucharist-focused theology of the priesthood developed at the Council of Trent to the more broadly ecclesial and ministerial theology that emerged from the Second Vatican Council, including the restoration of the permanent diaconate. The chapter also gives an account of the revisions in the rite of ordination subsequent to Vatican II.

Keywords: ordination, priest, bishop, deacon, sacrament, ministry, Council of Trent, Vatican II

ORDINATION is both an act of the Holy Spirit and of Christ, and an act of the community empowering and designating an individual for public ministry in the Church through prayer to the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). To speak of 'holy orders' in the Catholic tradition is to refer to the threefold participation of bishop, presbyter (priest), and deacon in the one sacrament of order. In English it has become customary to use Holy Orders, in the plural, to refer to the three instantiations of the sacrament, but the Latin is *sacramentum ordinis,* 'sacrament of order', in the singular. This chapter observes the Latin usage and speaks of the 'sacrament of order'. The threefold pattern is how we know the sacrament today, but its origins in the early Church were much more fluid and tentative.

Terminology

The English word 'priest' is used at times to translate both *presbyter* and *sacerdos*, the equivalent of the Greek *hierus*. Although the English word 'priest' has etymological roots in *presbyter*, it inadequately distinguishes the second degree of the sacrament of order from the first since both presbyters (priests) and bishops are priests (*sacerdos*). Because of the need in this chapter to distinguish theologically between bishops and presbyters, 'presbyter' will designate a member of the presbyterate, the second degree of the sacra-

ment of order. In turn, ‘priest’ will generally be used where it is appropriate to speak of either a bishop or a presbyter in their shared ministerial priesthood, particularly in their liturgical role. The reality is that a candidate is ordained a priest within the order of the presbyterate. This person can be called either a ‘priest’ or a ‘presbyter’. The Greek *presbyteros* means an elder, and in a technical sense, refers to a person holding a position of trust and respect.

In the early monoepiscopate as witnessed by Ignatius of Antioch (*c.*115), a group of presbyters functioned as a council to the bishop, who served as the leader of the (p. 295) community as well as the focus of unity within the whole community, and who was assisted by a college of presbyters and by deacons. This threefold structure became a standard pattern in the course of the second and third centuries. Only around the fourth century did presbyters assume sacerdotal, that is, priestly functions when the bishop delegated them to perform sacramental duties as the Church expanded into rural areas and the bishop exercised *episcopé* over a number of local communities at the same time. The bishop was the original minister of not only the Eucharist, but also of the reconciliation of sinners, solemn baptism with Chrismation, and ordination. Today he remains the sole minister of ordination, while presbyters are ordinary ministers of Eucharist and penance, and pastors regularly confirm at the Easter vigil.

New Testament Origins

No single pattern of Church structure or leadership is manifested in the New Testament. Instead, various patterns developed slowly over time and in various forms within the various communities. Furthermore, terminology to designate leadership was initially fluid, the presbyters in a certain location being entrusted with the same tasks of oversight or pastoral leadership elsewhere entrusted to *episcopoi* or bishops. The New Testament gives ample evidence of the existence of presbyters in the Christian community. In Acts 11:29f, Barnabus and Saul bring the donations from the community at Antioch to the presbyters, and in Acts 15:2ff the latter exercise some kind of teaching authority along with the apostles. We see evidence of presbyters in 1 Peter, James, and the Pastoral Epistles, although their precise responsibilities are not given. However, we do have lists of qualifications in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Tim. 3:1-7. In Jas. 5:14f, the elders are to be summoned to anoint and to pray for the sick.

The New Testament never uses the terms ‘priest’ or ‘priesthood’ to designate community leaders or the ministry of the Christian priesthood, but rather reserves their use to refer to the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ and the royal and prophetic priesthood of all the baptized. Both terms function in their own ways with respect to sacrifice and intercession. The letter to the Hebrews describes the function of the priesthood as follows: ‘Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins’ (Heb. 5:1; compare Heb. 8:3). The letter describes Jesus as entering ‘once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption’ (Heb. 9:12). 1 Pe-

ter identifies all believers as belonging to a 'royal priesthood, a holy nation' (1 Pet. 2:9). This royal priesthood is called to offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4–10; compare Rev. 5:10). The language of priesthood only began to be used of Christian ministry at the end of the second century, and then it was applied to the bishop. Cyprian, in the third century, used the terms *episcopus* (bishop) and *sacerdos* (priest) almost interchangeably (see Donovan 1987: 800).

(p. 296) The Twelve

From the beginning, Jesus called and assembled disciples around himself. The Gospel of Luke mentions Jesus' appointment of seventy or seventy-two sent as laborers into his harvest (Luke 10:1–24). Here there seems to be an allusion to the seventy 'elders' of Moses (Exod. 24:1; Num. 11:16). Distinct from this larger group is the choice of the Twelve, solidly attested to by the synoptic writers and identified as apostles in Mark 3:14 and Luke 6:13 (Luke and Paul, however, also extend the notion of 'apostle' to include more than the Twelve). These seem to be a relatively stable group of followers chosen to be 'with him' (Mark 3:13–14). The number is symbolic, alluding to the twelve tribes of Israel and the restoration of the messianic people. The significance of 'twelve' is evident in the preoccupation of the community to restore the number twelve by replacing Judas and thus to assure continuity of the divine plan (Acts 1:12–26). At stake in the symbolism of 'twelve' is the identity of both Jesus as Messiah and the identity of the early Christian community as the remnant of the messianic community as interpreted in the writings of the prophets. For example, in Ezek. 36 this remnant is the seed of the future, identified with the New Israel, and infused with a new spirit and a new heart.

At one level, the mission of the Twelve in the Scriptures seems not to be very different from that of others who believed in Christ. For example, the discourse in Matt. 9:35–11:1, addressed to the Twelve, incorporates a number of sayings that refer to all the faithful in Matt. 18. Similarly, while Luke 22:26ff describes the ministry of the apostles as service (*diakonia*) (compare Mark 9:35, 10:43f; Matt. 20:26–28), so too all the faithful are called to be servants (Matt. 23:11; John 12:25f). What is distinctive about the mission of the Twelve is that they share in the mission of Christ by preaching the kingdom of God (Luke 8:1–2; Matt. 10:5–42) and by being shepherds as Christ is the good shepherd (John 21:15–18; Matt. 9:35–38).

Although it is sometimes assumed that the 'Twelve' and the college of the apostles are the same, the scriptural evidence does not support this assumption as Paul, Barnabas, Apollos, and others were included in this latter category, which continued into the second century. While Luke is the evangelist who most strongly associates the apostles with the Twelve, mentioning them six times, he includes Paul as an apostle. Mark and Matthew identify the Twelve with the apostles only once and John not at all. There is no scriptural evidence that the Twelve functioned as early bishops or as sacramental practitioners.

According to Raymond Brown, in Luke's account, the Twelve acted as a kind of 'Council' which convened the Christian community when decisions needed to be made that affected the entire community, as in Acts 6 with the controversy over the Hellenists and in Acts 15 with the convening of the 'Jerusalem Council' (Brown 1970: 58).

(p. 297) Ministries in the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic Church

Ministry in the early Church was fluid and evolving. The New Testament sources do not present an explicit account of how the Church was structured, although there are three lists of ministries: Rom. 12:4–8, 1 Cor. 12:4–12, and, in the second generation, Eph. 4:11–13. Apostles, prophets, and teachers constituted the most prominent ministries in the Pauline letters. Prophets and teachers seem to have had an authority similar to that of the apostles (1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 13:1; 15:32; Eph. 2:20; 3:5; 4:11).

There is evidence of bishops, presbyters, and deacons in the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 20:28 compares the office of *episkopos* to that of a shepherd who keeps watch over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made the bishop overseers, to shepherd the Church of God. In Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas install presbyters in the churches they visit. In Phil. 1:1 Paul greets the 'bishops and deacons' of that community.

In the Pastoral Epistles, post-Pauline, the terms *presbyteros* and *episkopos* are not clearly distinguished, presbyters and bishops for all practical purposes being the same. In Acts, 1 Peter, and the Pastoral Epistles, the titles are largely interchangeable (see Brown 1970: 65–72). The Pastoral Epistles deal explicitly with the role of the *presbyteros/episkopos,* prescribing what is expected in terms of their character and their work (1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9). They exercise responsibility for the churches founded by the apostles. While the apostles were more charismatic figures, the presbyter-bishop represented and served institutional stability (Brown 1970: 36). For example, he must manage a household well (1 Tim. 3:4–5). The presbyter-bishop was a teacher with the duty of censoring all teaching (Titus 1:9) as well as an administrator most likely in charge of the community's finances.

The *Didache*, most probably written in the latter half of the first century or very early in the second century, witnesses to a Church structure in transition. Churches were still led by itinerant teachers and prophets, the prophets being the ones who 'give thanks' (*eucharistein*), meaning that they presided over the Eucharist (*Didache* 10:7; see also Brown 1970: 41). Chapter 11 gives instructions regarding apostles, prophets, and teachers, but they are being replaced by bishops and deacons chosen by the community, who render the service of the group identified as 'prophets and teachers' (Ch. 15). Ignatius of Antioch (*c*130) insists that only the bishop or one of the presbyters could preside over the Eucharist (Smry 8.1, Eph. 20.2).

The *First Epistle of Clement* (*c*.AD 96), addressed by the Church of Rome to the Church in Corinth, contains one of the earliest teachings on succession. The letter presupposes that

the Churches are governed by bishops (always in the plural, who are also called presbyters), and by deacons. According to the author, the bishops' authority ultimately comes from their appointment by the apostles: '… they [apostles] appointed their first converts, after testing them by the Spirit to be the bishops and deacons of the (p. 298) future believers.' (*1Clem*. 42) If these should die, 'other approved men should succeed to their ministry' (*1Clem*. 44). Clement linked the bishop with the sending of Christ by the Father and the sending of the apostles by Christ, which made the bishop a successor of the apostles. Thus bishops assured the continuity of Christ's presence through apostolic succession.

During the time of Ignatius of Antioch, in many communities one bishop emerged with a college of presbyters, although scholars do not know how universal the Church structure was as described by Ignatius at the time. For Ignatius, Christ surrounded by the Twelve remains in the Church through the person of the bishop surrounded by the presbyters (*Mag*. 6.1, 3.1–2; *Trall.* 3.1). The monarchical episcopate served the unity of the Church and was a sign of doctrinal orthodoxy in the refutation of heresies. In Ignatius of Antioch we find what seems to be the first time that three categories of ministry—bishop, presbyters, and deacons—are clearly differentiated: 'hasten to do all things in the harmony of God, with the bishop presiding in the place of God and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles, and the deacons, who are especially dear to me, entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ …' (*Mag*. 6; Ehrman 2003: 247). The community is the manifestation in the Spirit of the apostolic community. Thus for Ignatius, the community should subject themselves to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, to the presbytery as to the apostles (*Trall.* 2), or to respect the bishop as a copy of the Father, the deacons as Jesus Christ, the presbyters as the Council of God, and the band of the apostle (*Trall*. 3). In the same letter, the analogies are fluid and varied rather than fixed and literal.

Since the scriptural and historical evidence shows that the bishops were most likely not appointed by the Twelve, one may ask in what sense they are to be considered the successors to the apostles? The Second Vatican Council assumes that the college of the apostles and the Twelve called by Jesus are the same thing and that the college of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles (*LG* 22). Yet there is no direct evidence of the Twelve directly commissioning others to do their work, with the possible exception of Acts 6:1–6, in which hands were laid on seven men to serve the community of the Hellenists (Brown 1970: 52–55).

There were two different types of apostles: the Twelve, companions of Jesus, who were neither missionaries nor bishops; and the Pauline missionary apostles, a group larger than the Twelve, also not bishops (Brown 1970: 51–54). Even after the death of the missionary apostles, their closest disciples often exercised some pastoral supervision of local churches (Brown 1970: 74). Paul, for example, would be one of the 'missionary apostles'. If he did not write the Pastoral Epistles, then Titus and Timothy, who had been his companions, would be examples of what Brown calls 'second-grade apostles' (Brown 1970: 74). For evidence that the title 'apostle' continued to be used after the first generation

had died see *Didache* 11.3-6. Eventually this apostolic supervision of the local churches, including those under the leadership of the presbyter-bishops, died out.

Although Paul, a missionary apostle but not one of the Twelve, founded churches and may have appointed presbyter-bishops, there is no evidence that the Twelve did (Brown 1970: 43). Presbyter-bishops, however, were successors to missionary apostles, with the caveat that there is no evidence that ‘a church structure which included bishops (p. 299) was established by missionary apostles or even that it was established in all the churches founded by a single missionary apostle’ (Brown 1970: 73) Raymond Brown speculates that when churches without presbyter-bishops decided to establish them for the first time, it was in imitation of churches that already had them, but not necessarily with any special apostolic appointment. He concludes that it is impossible to trace the appointments or ordinations of bishops in the early Church to the Twelve with any assurance, and in fact only some of them can be traced to apostles such as Paul (Brown 1970: 73).

There are other reasons, however, for asserting that the bishops are successors of the apostles, even if a direct lineage through an unbroken laying on of hands traceable to the Twelve is unsustainable. Insofar as bishops were resident pastors of the churches founded by the apostles, they functioned with respect to the later Church in the same way that the apostles related to the primitive Church (Brown 1970: 42). The primacy of Peter was preserved in the Church through the Church and bishop of Rome, the city where Peter (and Paul) died (see Tillard 1983). The gradual development of the episcopacy does not negate its function as a clear sign of apostolicity. From the moment when the office existed, bishops have been responsible for preserving apostolic teaching free from heresy. An apostle is essentially a witness to the life, death, resurrection, and teaching of Christ by virtue of a gift of the Holy Spirit. The second-century lists of episcopal lineage identified a line of legitimate teachers, indicating that their teaching faithfully represented the teaching of the apostles, particularly in response to the gnostic challenge to this teaching at the time. Later, solidarity with the episcopate would preserve the unity of the Church during other doctrinal crises.

The Third Century: *The Apostolic Tradition*

Traditionally attributed to Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition* (*c*.215) contains the earliest ordination rites for bishops, presbyters, and deacons. According to this text, the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination comprise the essence of the sacramental rite (for the text see Stewart 2015). The principal elements of ordination in Acts 13:2–3 include a preliminary fast, imposition of hands, and prayer. The ordination rite in *The Apostolic Tradition* includes imposition of hands by bishops and priests in silence, silent prayer, possibly a second imposition of hands on the head of the elect by all of the bishops present, a prayer of consecration made only by the ordaining bishop, and the kiss of peace (see Bradshaw 1978: 34–35). Scholars identify the first imposition of hands as a designation of the candidate, reserving the consecratory value to the second.

The laying on of hands, common to all rites of ordination, can signify invocation of the Holy Spirit who gives the bishop the spiritual gifts to be leader and high priest of the people of God, conferral of powers, confirmation of the selection of the ordinand, and reception into the episcopal college (see Lécuyer 1960). The gesture of the laying on of (p. 300) hands recalls the enthronement of Joshua and the consecration of kings and high priests in the Old Testament. It evokes the descent of the Spirit on Christ in the Jordan and on the apostles at Pentecost. The practice of laying on of hands:

> symbolizes the Church's conviction that it does not derive its life from itself but from Christ and his Spirit and that the ministries which communicate, sustain, develop, and express its life derive their power, not from the community and not from the individuals selected, but from God
>
> (Komonchak 1978: 19).

The Fourth Century: Augustine and the Donatists

In North Africa the Church was faced with the problem of clergy who had renounced their faith by handing over (*tradito*) the sacred Scriptures during the persecution of Diocletian (Emperor 284-305; the persecution took place in 302-3). Two opposing parties held differing views on the legitimacy of these lapsed clergy and of the sacraments they administered. Donatus (d. 355) was elected in 313 as a purist rival bishop to Caecilian of Carthage, who was thought by some to have been ordained in 311 by a *traditor*-someone who had committed the sin of *traditio*. Donatus declared the sacraments of lapsed clergy to be invalid, and thus Caecilian's ordination likewise. The Donatists, thinking themselves to be defenders of a pure Church, also said that the impure, the *traditors* required rebaptism in order to be readmitted to the Church. Augustine, representing the Catholic Church, argued that the sacramental rites of the Church have an objective and permanent validity independent of the subjective state of the minister. Because Christ is the agent of the sacraments, the effectiveness of the sacrament does not depend upon the 'purity' of the minister (eg. See *ev. Io. tr.* 5:15).

Medieval Developments

Early medieval theology (AD 600–1000) and practices of ordained ministry were influenced by the Frankish proprietary churches where the rural churches were considered the property of the landlord and had little association with the urban, episcopal Church. During this period the priest was appointed by the proprietor and became the focus of ministry, rather than the bishop, as did the parish rather than the diocese. This localization of the Church gave rise to liturgical pluralism (see Osborne 1988: 173). The priest functioned primarily as a liturgical person largely independent of the bishop, and the parish was the focus of Church life. Meanwhile, in the city, the traditional pattern of

(p. 301) the monarchical bishop continued. In the clash between these two forms of ministry, the Frankish model won out and the proprietary model became a major influence on later theologies of priesthood. This model influenced the later medieval period when the priest, not the bishop, was viewed as the highest order within the sacrament of Holy Orders.

By AD 1100 a number of sacramental changes were in place that effected changes in the theology of the priesthood. At this time episcopal consecration was not seen as a Holy Order in the West, and the presbyter was considered the fullness of the priesthood. The Celtic form of reconciliation had replaced the Roman system of reconciliation. Anointing was reserved to the priest because it involved the forgiveness of sin, one of the powers of the priesthood. Although minor ministries began to appear in the latter part of the third century, both in the East and the West, by 1150 there were seven orders to Holy Order in the West: tonsure, porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte, subdeacon, and priest. The bishop was not one of the seven, although one had to have passed through all the orders to be eligible for the 'dignity' of bishop.

Scholastic theology focused its attention on the sacrament of order of the priest and the sacramental character it imparted. The relation of the priest to the presbyterate, the bishop, and the Christian community was not developed in the theology of this period (Vidal 1986: 2088). Bernard Cooke registers surprise that given the growth of theology during the High Middle Ages there was so little systematic attention given to Christian ministry and priesthood comparable to that given to the Trinity, grace, or Christian virtue (Cooke 1976: 576). The point of departure for an analysis of the priesthood was the Eucharist and the priest's power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Since a bishop cannot do this any more intensively than a priest, the focus was on the priesthood rather than the episcopacy, since many theologians of this period, including Peter Lombard (*c.*1096-1160), considered the essence and highest powers of ordination to be conferred in presbyteral ordination (see Lombard, *Sent.* 4,d.24,*c.*16; Hugh of St Victor, *sacr*. 2.3.12; Aquinas, *In IV Sent.* d.23, q.1, a.3, q.3). In their opinion the sacrament of order did not include the bishop, and only the roles of priest and deacon had their origins in Jesus and the apostles. The other five orders were instituted by the Church. A bishop was considered to be essentially a presbyter, with the additional powers of ordination as well as the power of the keys, which enabled him to excommunicate.

The theology of the sacramental character was most completely developed in the theology of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), who described it as an ontological participation in the priesthood of Christ. Thomas considered the sacramental character to be the source of the power of priestly action (*ST* III, q.63). Medieval theology explained the sacramental character as the *res et sacramentum,* the reality and sign, of the sacrament, which was an indelible participation in the priesthood of Christ. The sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and ordination confer a sacramental character insofar as they depute an individual to do or to receive something pertaining to the worship achieved by the priesthood of Christ (*ST* III, q.63, a.6). Where the sacramental character of baptism was understood to depute an individual to divine worship (*ST* III, q.63, a.1 and 6), the sacramental character

of ordination was understood to depute men to hand on the (p. 302) sacraments to others (*ST* III, q.63, a.6). Although Christ alone is the perfect mediator between God and humans, 'priests of the New Law may be called mediators of God and men, insofar as they are ministers of the true mediator, administering, in his person, the sacraments of salvation to men' (*ST* III, q.63, q.26, a.1) The priest, then, is an instrument of Christ and exercises his sacramental and pastoral power by participating in the power of Christ. This emphasis on the sacramental character of ordination focused the attention on the priest himself rather than on his relationship to the presbyterate, the bishop, and the Christian community.

During the medieval period the ritual of priestly ordination retained the traditional imposition of hands and prayer to the Holy Spirit, but embellished the rite with many secondary or explanatory texts and ceremonies used in ministry. The allegorizing mentality of the Middle Ages interpreted persons, events, and rites of the Old Testament in terms of the New Testament. The liturgy was also allegorized, the origins of which were not Roman, but Gallican and Frankish adaptations of earlier Eastern practice (see Puglisi 1996: 159; Holmes 2015). These secondary elements included the bestowal of the chalice and the paten with the bread and wine, for the priest, and the bestowal of the crozier, the ring, and the Book of the Gospels for the bishop. These supplementary rites illustrated the reality of the grace and the sacramental power received in ordination. For many scholastics, the tradition of the instruments, the chalice and paten, was also considered to constitute the matter of the sacrament.

Changes in the ordination rites during the centuries preceding the 1596 Roman Pontifical were characterized by the accretion of new rites. While these were visually and dramatically enriching, the result was that individual ministries lacked a coherent and intelligible vision (see Puglisi 1996: 169). The emphasis was placed on the sacred powers received by an individual rather than on ministry as a service to the community or on the fraternal communion into which the ordinand was received. The context for understanding the meaning of ordination became more juridical than ecclesiological. In an earlier period presbyteral ministry was strongly collegial, and the episcopacy was more obviously a collegial body. The rites of ordination in the scholastic period reflected the hierarchical aspect of the Church more strongly than a Church characterized by communion.

The Sacrament of Order and the Council of Trent

The Council of Trent discussed the sacrament of order in its twenty-third session, 15 July 1563, treating the priesthood in terms of its theology in response to the reformers, and with respect to pastoral and spiritual reform in response to the need for pastoral reform in the life of the Catholic Church. Its theology of the priesthood generally followed the thought of Thomas Aquinas and concentrated on the priesthood in relationship to the (p. 303) Eucharist and to the forgiveness of sins. It affirmed a visible and external priesthood as revealed in the New Testament. It distinguished between minor and major orders

within the several distinct orders of ministers, identifying the subdiaconate, diaconate, and priesthood as the major orders. Affirming that ordination imparts the Holy Spirit, confers grace, and is performed by words and outward signs, the Council of Trent taught that order is truly and properly one of the seven sacraments. In addition, it taught the permanence of the priesthood, the inability to return to the lay state on account of the indelible sacramental character imprinted by ordination, as well as the existence of a hierarchical order of ministries to which bishops belong.

The Council of Trent was unable to consider the sacramental nature of episcopal consecration since the Roman Curia was concerned that if it were to be viewed as an order and a sacrament by divine right, *jure divino,* this might adversely affect papal primacy. The conciliar debate on the divine institution of the episcopacy distinguished between jurisdiction and order and was predicated on the supreme power of the pope to govern the universal Church. The Council affirmed that bishops are superior to priests insofar as they administer the sacrament of confirmation, ordain ministers of the Church, and perform other functions which inferior orders cannot. Bishops chosen by the Roman pontiff are legitimate bishops. The consent of the people, civil power, or magistrate is not required for an ordination to be valid. Likewise, no one can exercise ordained offices apart from ordination.

The Reform decrees of the Council of Trent addressed various abuses and enforced a more rigorous discipline among clergy and monks. The authority of bishops over the clergy was strengthened, and bishops were admonished to reside in their dioceses and to live a pious and modest life (*On Reform* [sess. 22, 1562], canon 1; Tanner 1990: 737; *On General Reform* [sess. 25, 1563], 1; Tanner 1990: 784). They were forbidden to enrich their relatives or domestics out of the revenues of the Church (*On General Reform* [sess. 25, 1563], 1: Tanner 1990: 784). Bishops and priests were required to preach and to explain the use and efficacy of the sacraments to the faithful in a language and manner comprehensible to them (*On Reform* [sess. 24, 1563], canon 4 and 7; Tanner 1990: 763–764). The Council mandated the establishment of seminaries for the education of the clergy in each diocese. The reinforcement of the requirement of clerical dress (*On Reform* [sess. 14, 1551], canon 6; Tanner 1990: 716–717) and the reaffirmation of clerical celibacy emphasized the separation between the clergy and the laity and the distinction between the sacred life of the Church and the social life of the modern world (*On the Sacrament of Marriage* [sess. 24, 1563] canon 9; Tanner 1990: 755).

The *Pontificale Romano* 1596–1968

The 1596 edition of the Roman Pontifical (RP 1596), promulgated by Clement VIII, contains the rite of ordination that largely remained in effect from its promulgation in 1596 to the revision of the rite in 1968 in accordance with the Second Vatican Council’s (p. 304) mandate to revise the books used in the liturgy according to the principles enunciated in *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* the Constitution on the Liturgy (1963). The Roman

Pontifical (RP) established by the Council of Trent contained only minor modifications of the liturgies in use since the thirteenth century.

The order of rites in RP 1596 is in ascending order: first the minor orders (porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte), then the major orders (subdiaconate, diaconate, presbyterate), and lastly, the episcopate. This order differs from the ancient liturgy, which was in descending order, starting with the episcopacy. Because the Council of Trent did not address the question of the sacramentality of the episcopacy, the order in the liturgical books remained unchanged until the question was resolved at Vatican II.

Hands were imposed three times in the 1596 rite. In addition, the accumulation of secondary symbolic additions to the rite emphasized the sacred powers of the priesthood, namely the power to consecrate the Eucharist and the power to absolve sins, especially when compared to the simplicity of *The Apostolic Tradition*'s central act of ordination, which consisted of the imposition of hands and the epiclesis. This accumulation of secondary symbolic additions in the 1596 rite also emphasized the person of the minister rather than the ministry and represented a primarily Christological rather than a pneumatological understanding of the priesthood. Ministry was seen as the exercise of priestly power more than the building up of the Christian community (Puglisi 2001: 20–21).

Pius XII (Pope 1939-1958) reasserted the centrality of the epiclesis as the essential rite of ordination by decreeing the sign of the sacrament to be the imposition of hands and the form of the sacrament to be the prayer of ordination in his apostolic constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* (1947). Paul VI (Pope 1963-1978) confirmed this in his apostolic constitution *Pontificalis romani* ("Approving New Rites for the Ordination of Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops") (1968).

Liturgical Revisions after Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council mandated the revision of all the liturgical rites according to the principal articulated in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*:

> … the texts and rites must be organized so as to express more clearly the holy things which they represent, and so that thus the Christian people, insofar as this is possible, will be able to understand these things easily, and to enter into them through a celebration that is expressive of their full meaning, is effective, involving, and the community's own
>
> (*SC* 21).

The rites for ordination, promulgated in 1968, only five years after Vatican II had mandated the revision, were the first of the reformed liturgical books of the Roman Rite of the sacramental rites. The need for the revision was pressing since those in use up to (p. 305) 1968, promulgated by Clement VIII in 1595, were a compilation of texts and ceremonies from a number of earlier sources, reflecting doctrinal and cultural influences from the fifth to the end of the thirteenth century. Essential rites, such as the laying on of hands,

were buried under secondary rites, and elements of the rite of ordination were scattered through the eucharistic liturgy.

The 1968 revision of the ordination rite restored the balance between the two primary meanings of the presbyterate received from the tradition: (1) the presbyterate is a college in service of the bishops; and (2) the priesthood exists for the sanctification of the people of God through sacramental ministry (Wood 2000: 86). It also clarified the relationships among the three orders and delineated their respective roles in building up the Church. The renewal was faithful to the tradition of the early Church. For example, even though the 1968 rite only slightly modified the ordination prayer of priests, the ending was changed to include a larger missionary perspective: 'May he be faithful in working with the order of bishops, so that the words of the Gospel may reach the ends of the earth, and the family of nations made one in Christ may become God's one, holy people' (ICEL 1991: 45). Even though Vatican II taught the sacramentality of episcopal consecration, now clearly identified as an ordination, the 1968 rite did not reorder the pontifical to reflect that reality. That would only be changed in the 1990 Roman Pontifical.

The 1968 revision removed allegorical interpretations of ritual actions and created a common parallel structure for the three orders. The Eucharist proceeds as usual up through the Gospel. The ordination rite then includes the call, the presentation, and election of the ordinands, the examination of the elect, the Litany of the Saints, the imposition of hands and the prayer of consecration, followed by the secondary rites (anointing, investiture, *porrectio*). The Eucharist continues after the ordination rite.

Paul VI suppressed first tonsure, minor orders, and the subdiaconate in his *motu proprio, Ministeria quaedam*, 15 August 1972. At the same time, he established the installed ministries of reader and acolyte and reserved them to men only, both those in preparation for ordained ministry and also laymen. Candidates for ordination as deacons or priests are required to receive these ministries and exercise them for a time in order to be 'better disposed for the future service of the word and of the altar' (*Ministeria quaedam* 11). Reader and acolyte are now ministries rather than minor orders. They have not entered the life of the Church in a significant way because they are limited to laymen, while women, who can be and are commissioned to service as extraordinary ministers of Communion and lectors, cannot be admitted to these formal canonical ministries.

The Congregation for Divine Worship promulgated a second typical edition of the 1968 rite in 1989 (though it was published with a 1990 date). It addressed two major deficiencies in the 1968 rites of ordination: the lack of a general introduction comparable to those in the liturgical books published later for the other sacraments, and the need for a new ordination prayer for priests, one which focused more on the priesthood of Christ than on the Old Testament priesthood. The 1990 Roman Pontifical also presented the rites of ordination in a descending order, beginning with the bishop, reflecting the teaching that the bishop receives the fullness of the sacrament of order (*LG* 26). Other changes in the second typical edition include supplemental promises in the rite for (p. 306) presbyters and a promise of celibacy in the rite for deacons. Even those who have made profession of per-

petual chastity in a religious institution are bound to make this commitment to celibacy, a promise of obedience and respect to the local bishop by religious candidates. The second typical edition also inserts the rite of admission to candidacy for Holy Orders in the appendix of the pontifical.

Ordained Ministry after Vatican II

Three documents from Vatican II treat the ordained ministry: *Christus Dominus*, on the pastoral ministry of bishops, *Optatam totius*, on the training of priests, and *Presbyterorum ordinis,* on the ministry and life of priests. The change in the title of *Presbyterorum ordinis* is particularly revelatory of the theology of priesthood of the Council. It went from *De clericis* (on clerics), to *De sacerdotibus* (on priests), to *De vita et ministerio sacerdotium* (on the ministry and life of priests), to finally *De presbyterorum ministerio et vita* (on the ministry and life of presbyters) (see Donovan 1992: 3–4). The bishops wanted to emphasize that the priesthood is not in the first place a state of life, but rather a service and a ministry.

A paradigm for understanding the various roles of the priest and bishop is the threefold office of priest, prophet, and king/shepherd. A priest presides at worship and ministers the sacraments to the people. As prophet, the ordained person ministers to the word of God through teaching and preaching. As king/shepherd, the ordained minister builds up the Christian community through his pastoral leadership and coordination of the charisms of the people of God.

The theology of ordained ministry at Vatican II reflects a broadening representative of this threefold office. Where the Council of Trent had made the priestly category central, Vatican II brought preaching and pastoral activities into balance with sacral activities. Where the celebration of the Eucharist was the departure for an analysis of priestly ministry at Trent, the theology of ministry was more integrated into the mission of the Church at Vatican II. Thus where the priesthood was viewed in terms of its power over the eucharistic body of Christ at Trent, the pastoral role of priests in terms of the ecclesial body of Christ was more evident at Vatican II. There was a broadening from a preoccupation with worship to a consideration of the priest’s whole life and ministry, inclusive of worship, but also embracing a priest’s ministry of the word and his pastoral leadership. The upbuilding of the Church and formation of the mystical body of Christ achieved sacramentally are concretized outside times of worship through teaching, evangelization, the model of holiness of life, and the orchestration of the various charisms within the Christian community (Wood 200: 137). The theology of Vatican II thus integrates the sacral aspects of priestly ministry with the rest of priestly ministry.

Vatican II’s teaching on the sacramentality of episcopal consecration as well as a consideration of the role of the episcopacy within an ecclesiology of communion has (p. 307) heightened the representative character of the episcopacy, both in terms of bishops’ responsibility for unity within their own particular churches, but also in their role for keeping each bishop’s church in communion with its apostolic past and in communion with all

other particular churches and with the Bishop of Rome. Thus the 'fullness' of the sacrament of order does not simply mean 'fullness of power', but 'fullness of representation'. While the ability to administer various sacraments has been attributed to different orders throughout time, what a bishop can do that a presbyter cannot is represent his church within the communion of Churches. Where we have always traditionally understood ordination as signifying configuration to Christ, the head of the Church, we now understand that this configuration does not occur within an ordained minister in isolation from that minister's *ordo* within an ecclesial community (Wood 2000: 79). Thus the bishop, in his fullness of priesthood, represents not only Christ, but the Church, in its relationship within the communion of Churches. The college of bishops represents this communion within the relationships among the bishops.

Finally, Vatican II restored the diaconate as a permanent ministry in the Catholic Church (*LG* 29). Paul VI established canonical norms for the permanent diaconate in his apostolic letter *Sacrum diaconatus ordinem* (18 June 1967). He promulgated a revision of the rite of ordination in *Pontificalis romani* in 1968, and then in *Ad Pascendum* in 1972 he established norms for the diaconate, addressing the admissions and training of deacons, and the requirement of celibacy for unmarried deacons.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in the United States requested and received permission to restore the permanent diaconate in 1968. The Bishops' Conference cites these reasons: to enrich and strengthen the many and various diaconal ministries with the sacramental grace of the diaconate; to enlist a new group of devout competent men in the active ministry of the Church; to aid in extending needed liturgical and charitable services to the faithful in both large urban and small rural communities; and to provide an impetus and source for creative adaptation of diaconal ministries to the rapidly changing needs of our society (NCCB 1984: 1–2).

Vatican II made it possible to confer the diaconal order on married men of more mature age, generally thirty-five, with the consent of their wives. This possibility signals that the diaconate is not to be considered as only a step toward the priesthood. When the permanent diaconate was first restored, a deacon could not remarry on the death of his wife. The Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments issued a circular letter on 6 June 1997 to diocesan bishops and heads of men's religious orders informing them that John Paul II had stipulated that any one of the three following conditions would be sufficient for a dispensation from the impediment for remarriage: (1) the great and proven usefulness of the ministry of the deacon to the diocese to which he belongs; (2) that he has children of such tender age as to be in the need of motherly care; and (3) that he has parents or parents-in-law who are elderly and in need of care (Congregation for Divine Worship 1997: 171).

This overview of ordination demonstrates that the rites, practice, and theology of ordained ministry have evolved over time. Undoubtedly, they will continue to do so.

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Marriage and Sexuality

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This chapter considers Catholic teaching on marriage and sexuality. It begins by considering tensions concerning marriage in Catholic theology since the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II). Attempts to move beyond primarily juridical accounts of marriage have been fruitful and have led to an overvaluation of modern notions of romantic love and the person. Against this tendency the chapter discusses how theologies of marriage attentive to the teaching of Vatican II—and of prior Catholic tradition—place the notion of marriage squarely within the sacramental life of the Church. Marriage is conceived as revealing and furthering the divine plan for humanity. Within this context the chapter explores recent magisterial pronouncements and work by theologians on the place of the family or the household within the Church. This exploration leads back to a reimagining of the spousal bond.

Keywords: marriage, sexuality, sacrament, love, personalism, family, celibacy, nature and grace, Church

THE Eucharist is no meal, nor is baptism much of a bath. The sacrament of marriage, on the other hand, really is marriage. As the (historically speaking) latecomer to the sacramental feast, marriage remains the odd guest, eliciting more controversy than the others. It was not until the thirteenth century that Catholic theologians came to accept marriage as a sacrament in a full sense of being a cause of grace and not merely a sign, and even then its significance was focused primarily on supporting the prohibition against divorce and remarriage (Martos 1991). Only in recent decades has a post-juridical Catholic moral theology allowed for great strides in developing a genuinely theological account of marriage and sexuality within the whole of the Christian life. At the same time, understandings of marriage and sexuality in contemporary societies have also undergone rapid and controversial changes. Thus, marriage and sexuality receive a great deal of theological attention because these topics form a site where working out the relationship between nature and supernature, between Church and world, presents many challenges. This chapter offers an overview and interpretation of these recent developments in the Catholic understanding of marriage in relation to the contemporary natural reality, aiming at a theol-

ogy of married life and sexuality firmly planted within the household of God and oriented to the formation of Catholics in the life of charity, which ushers us into God's own life.

What is Love? The Personalist Revolution

Marriage and sexuality are about love. But, as Pope John Paul II has observed, also 'God is love and in Himself He lives a mystery of personal loving communion' (*Familiaris Consortio* 11). Hence, 'the divine "We" is the eternal pattern of the human "we", especially of that "we" formed by the man and the woman created in the divine image and likeness' (*Gratissimam Sane* 6). These ideas seem like incontestable starting points for (p. 311) any theology of marriage and sexuality. But it was not always the case that discussions of marriage began with love, much less analogizing this sexual love to God's own life. Historically, practices of marriage served various social ends—chiefly procreation, but also economic, diplomatic, and clan ends, as well as the stabilization and limitation of socially disruptive forms of sexual liaison for both man and woman (Cooke 2009). For example, arranged marriage is an incomprehensible practice to most Westerners, because it lacks what is understood culturally to be the foundation of marriage, an interpersonal love that chooses a known beloved. Nevertheless, marriage was honoured highly in such contexts—being a cause for both intense celebration and (potentially) intense scandal—but such honour was not aimed at 'celebrating the love of the couple'.

The Christian tradition, in its biblical and premodern forms, came to offer a consistently articulated view of the goods of marriage. Classically, the goods were formulated by Augustine, with primacy given to the good of procreation, and secondarily an affirmation of what he terms the good of the 'natural association of the sexes' or 'mutual fidelity' (Augustine 1992: 104–105). Augustine also posits a third good 'for the people of God' which he names 'the holiness of the sacramental bond' (Augustine 1992: 120). This view remains stable in the Catholic tradition well into the twentieth century (for a detailed history, see Olsen 2001).

Within this tradition, the rise of romantic love in Western societies has been well-documented (Coontz 2005). Within official Catholic teaching, however, it was not until the twentieth century that love formally became central to the definition and description of marriage. In Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*, marriage is defined first as a 'community of love' (*GS* 47), further described as 'the intimate partnership of married life and love … rooted in the conjugal covenant … whereby spouses mutually bestow and accept each other …' (*GS* 48). The couple's life must manifest 'an intimate union of their persons and of their actions' as 'a mutual gift of two persons', foreshadowing the canonical definition of marriage as 'a communion of the whole of life'. The document goes on to discuss this love in some detail, noting that it is both 'eminently human' and also 'merg[es] the human with the divine' (§ 49). The importance of what is termed a 'personalist' understanding of marriage is given its ultimate sanction in this document, and is further reinforced by the writings of Pope John Paul II, as well as scores of other post-conciliar Catholic theologians.

How does this affirmation of love relate to the romantic understanding of the dominant culture? The document first and foremost speaks not of interpersonal love per se, but of the family as a ‘community of love’. The same phrase is used by council *peritus* Bernard Häring in his book published during the Second Vatican Council, as the first and foundational definition of the family (Häring 1965: 75). He contrasts this understanding of marriage with a purely contractual understanding. But interestingly, he also contrasts this community of love with a ‘modern’ view that ‘one-sidedly’ foregrounds ‘the partnership of the spouses, and this seen principally as a matter of sex’ (Häring 1965: 78). This mistake about love then leads to a marriage whose object is ‘the utilitarian aim of personal fulfillment’. By making these contrasts, Häring does not intend to dismiss the importance of contracts or of attraction—he simply means to say that these are (p. 312) not what is meant by the family as a ‘community of love’. He insists these notions must ultimately serve the larger notion of love, which he describes with terms such as ‘comprehensive’ and ‘integrated and settled’ (Häring 1965: 78, 81).

John Paul II further defines such a community by speaking of the family (and not simply the couple) as having, as one of its tasks, the formation of an ‘authentic community of persons’ (*Familiaris Consortio* 18). The council and the pope (*Gratissimam Sane* 8) both indicate that the ground for this community is first the mutual self-gift of the couple, but in so doing, they do *not* mean to indicate something necessary about interpersonal *affection*. Rather, they mean to suggest two quite different ideas: first, that the community cannot be formed apart from the firm and indissoluble commitment (consent) of the couple, which the pope (*Gratissimam Sane* 10) says ‘form the common good of the couple and the family’; and second, that this commitment is the necessary foundation for having and raising children, which he calls (*Familiaris Consortio* 14) the inseparable ‘crown’ of this initial commitment, an event which (*Gratissimam Sane* 7) ‘should consolidate that covenant, enriching and deepening the conjugal communion …’. The centrality of mutual consent, and the role this commitment plays in raising children has been central for the tradition since the Middle Ages (Coontz 2005). (For example, the sin of fornication is described by Aquinas [*ST* II–II, q.154, a.2] as an offence against possible offspring deprived of the stable parental union.)

Thus, ‘love’ in these documents need mean nothing at all about romantic affection or feeling. Rather, the love that is necessary to marriage might broadly (if unhelpfully!) be called ‘familial love’, the kind of love we manifest when we assume that members of a family will ‘always be there’ for one another, or the kind of love new parents understand when they have a child and recognize that they will never again live in a world where they are not this child’s parents. It is ‘a sort of compact of mutual loyalty’, a commitment that holds amidst inevitable changes and tragedies (Robinson 2005: 88). Coontz notes that in the nineteenth century, ‘love matches’ continued to be understood, not as a matter of romantic passion, but as a love that ‘developed slowly out of admiration, respect, and appreciation of someone’s good character’ (Coontz 2005: 184).

But in what may come to be seen as a quite unfortunate development, many Catholic authors after Vatican II, both liberal and conservative, chose to understand these developments as the Church both sanctioning and even divinizing romantic love and intimacy. In conjunction with this, they came to see the 'positive value' of human sexuality for the first time, a value that had already assumed a place of importance in the secular world. As Bernard Cooke (2009: 11, 20) rehearses the standard charge, '[b]y the year 200, however, a negativity toward human sexuality infiltrated Christianity', and after centuries of juridicism aimed at control and limitation, 'only in the mid-twentieth century would the relatedness of wife and husband … begin to receive acceptance as a primary purpose of Christian marriage'. Likewise, Christopher West, a conservative exponent of the 'theology of the body', accepts that pre-conciliar Catholicism often neglected the goodness of human sexuality, taking an 'often repressive approach' but now can talk of how 'the body enables us to "see" spiritual mysteries', including the Trinitarian love of God (West 2004: 5, 15). It is the primary point of the first part of this chapter to question (p. 313) this reading, not so as to reject any romance, but rather to establish clearly that this romantic love is not the central concern of Catholic marriage theology—even if it may very well be the central and overriding concern of the world's conception of marriage at this time and place.

Human and Divine? Competing Personalist Sacramental Theologies of Marriage

A central problem arises when the pronouncements of *Gaudium et Spes* are taken out of the context of the original intent of the constitution, a document wherein the Church seeks to enter into dialogue with the modern world. The document came about through a rather surprising process, and was not part of the council's original agenda (O'Malley 2008: 157–158, 204–205, 232–238). The 'questions of special urgency' treated in the second half of the constitution are all presented in the same pattern, a pattern established in the first half of the document (*GS* 1): a celebration of certain joys and hopes of the modern world, paired with a concern to speak to the 'griefs and anxieties' of that same world. Read outside this context, the constitution's treatment is often taken to be a redefining of Church teaching on marriage, one which de-emphasizes procreation in light of a newfound respect for the natural and supernatural power and promise of interpersonal love.

The loss of *Gaudium et Spes*' context is particularly awkward when the document is used as the basis for developing novel understandings of the sacramentality of marriage, rather than as a way to dialogue with those outside the Church. These novel understandings move in two directions, which I am calling 'existential' and 'nuptial', which themselves hinge on two different interpretations of the dialogue set up by *Gaudium et Spes*. It is clear that all Catholics did not understand the nature of this dialogue in the same way. For some, it meant that the Church was reopening to the goodness of human reality—and thus willing to learn as well as teach. For others, it meant that the Church could now speak its truly human message in new, more forceful and bold ways, 're-evangelizing' the

world. But in either case, the object of such speech was the world—or more exactly, modern Western culture. How did these two directions develop in speaking about the sacramentality of marriage?

On the one hand, some writers emphasized an ‘existential’ understanding of the sacramentality of marriage. Edward Schillebeeckx emphasized that the sacramental takes a secular, human reality, which is then ‘brought into salvation’ precisely as a human institution (Schillebeeckx 1965: 385). It becomes ‘precisely as a human institution—a sacred sign of a greater and deeper love …’ (Schillebeeckx 1965: xxix). Bernard Cooke similarly seeks to integrate sacramentality fully into the human reality of marriage (Cooke 2009: 20). He writes that sacramental marriage means marriage ‘transformed as a (p. 314) human experience because of its perceived role as a revelation of God’s loving presence to humans’. Michael Lawler describes sacramental marriage as ‘a two-storied reality’, one story being ‘a universal human institution’ founded on the love of the couple, and the other story being ‘a prophetic symbol in and through which the Church, the Body of Christ, reveals and celebrates in representation that presence of God which is called grace …’ (Lawler 2002: 4, 9). I call this position ‘existential’ because it seeks to place sacramentality simply at a deeper (or ‘transcendental’) level of the actual human experience—God’s grace illuminates reflective human existence. What sacramentality names is a deeper understanding of the (changeable) human reality itself. This position, in the words of John Milbank, ‘naturalizes the supernatural’ (Milbank 1990: 207). Milbank’s concern is directed at the Rahnerian ‘transcendental Thomist’ anthropology which is behind these understandings of nature and grace. Certainly these descriptions are an understandable attempt to recover a *living* understanding of sacramentality after centuries of juridicism and legalism, which often reduced ‘the sacrament’ to something extrinsic and added to a given natural reality. In the foreword to his study, Schillebeeckx (1965, vi) makes clear that the impetus for such a move is the ‘constant clash of views’ between traditional Church teaching and the work of social scientists (Schillebeeckx 1965: vi). Since assumptions about what constituted the natural reality of marriage and sexuality were clearly changing (most notably, the full equality of women), a widening gap arose, in which ecclesial speech about marriage became increasingly divorced from the living social reality, and his description aims to reintegrate such speech with actual life.

On the other hand, some writers express concern about this direction, especially insofar as it criticized traditional norms (e.g. against remarriage or same-sex unions) that seemed to stand in the way of romantic matches full of existential grace. Instead, these writers countered, what the sacrament provided was exactly the supernatural gifts to achieve the very high aspirations of romantic love, which itself was understood as ‘pre-sacramental’. Peter Elliott insists that ‘[t]he sacraments are given by God to transform us, to raise us to the supernatural order, the divine life, to “divinize” us . …’ (Elliott 1990: xxxii). His ‘sacramental realism’ is contrasted with Schillebeeckx’s position, though the contrast is subtle. While both are concerned to avoid construing the sacrament as some kind of ‘additional thing’, Elliott’s ‘nuptial understanding’ insists that the reality is not a matter of a *deeper* dimension of a changeable human institution, but that the human institution itself is ‘pre-sacramental’ (Elliott 1990: 200). The ‘real thing’ then anticipates the

direct mystical encounter with God's divine life. Angelo Scola shares his concern with a 'spiritualism' in the existential position, which locates sacramentality in some non-material, transcendent dimension of experience (Scola 2009: 149). Instead, as is most vividly displayed in Pope John Paul II's theology of the body, this nuptial understanding insists that sacramentality is 'achievable' on the immediate, material level. Sacramentality does not name a *deeper* dimension of the human, but rather the elevation and *fulfilment* of the human by the divine. It is not 'extrinsic' (even though it is in some sense added), because the natural reality already anticipates and points toward this fulfilment.

(p. 315) Thus, whereas the existential position might be said to 'naturalize' the sacrament, the nuptial position 'supernaturalizes' the natural reality. The effect is not so much to dialogue with contemporary culture on marriage but rather to evangelize it, to out-do it on its own terms. As West puts it, 'The problem with our sex-saturated culture, then, is not that it overvalues the body and sex. The problem is that it has failed to see just how valuable the body and sex really are' (West 2004: 4). Indeed, the Catholic view 'corresponds perfectly with the deepest yearnings of our hearts for love and union' (West 2004: 15). So, for example, even the prohibition on contraception, restated so controversially by Pope Paul VI in 1968 in *Humanae Vitae*, and resisted by so many as 'inconsistent' with the emerging personalism of marriage described at Vatican II—even this teaching is restated in personalist terms (e.g. Moleski 1999: 253). The refusal to contracept is not merely a respecting of natural finality, nor even a refusal to break the relationship of sex and procreation, but rather a matter of realizing and protecting the full, mutual self-giving love of the spouses. The contraception prohibition is literally 'romanticized'. This position is already reflected in some pre-Vatican II thought; for example, one priest writes that the sacrament is 'an operative sign which gives testimony of that supernatural life which Christ has communicated to us, that new power which enables man to attain to the most exalted moral and spiritual levels, and which so sharply distinguishes the world in which a Christian lives from its pagan counterpart' (D'Ascoli 1961: 81).

How might we evaluate this debate? Several points should be made. First, the two positions share a common intention: to move beyond centuries of sacramental juridicism, in which the primary concerns about the sacrament involved the appropriate conditions for the contract. Yet each is strongly driven by different perspectives on the contemporary situation. For 'nuptial' writers, the concern is a social breakdown in respect for marriage, and they are interested in a very 'high' view of the real possibilities of holiness. Tracey Rowland's appropriation of Benedict XVI's critique of 'pious Pelagianism' comes to mind, since the account of sacramental grace here is simply a matter of giving individual Christians the strength to achieve the full ends of marriage (Rowland 2010: 75–79). For 'existential' writers, the concern is real social advance in the marital institution, in which they want to be able to find the sacramentality of marriage in ordinary, changing life. Indeed, their attention to issues such as divorce and remarriage arises out of a pastoral urgency in addressing the seeming goodness and 'grace' of marriage found in places that do not necessarily conform to all the traditional norms. Both sides are seeking a language that

speaks to the real sense that God is experienced in marriage and family, and that the Church's teaching needs to reflect this reality.

Second, for all their differences, both often appear to endorse and even divinize the cultural conception of romantic love. Again, they do so in different ways, corresponding to competing schemes of nature and grace. And again, they should be affirmed in their desire to see the sacramentality of marriage as genuinely intertwined with God's love. However, despite their care and concern, the treatment of marital love often appears naïve. This difficulty may be seen in *Gaudium et Spes* itself. While the document (*GS* 49) stresses that this love 'far excels mere erotic inclination' and defines it as 'pure conjugal love and undivided attention', it also equates this love to the 'true love' that is (p. 316) 'highly regard[ed]' by 'many men of our own age'. Such a love acquires an agency that seems almost independent of the spouses—indeed, this love 'leads the spouses to a free and mutual gift of themselves' and 'by its generous activity it grows better and grows greater' and it 'remains steadfastly true in body and in mind, in bright days or dark'. Such a view of conjugal love as possessing an independent agency also corresponds well to the romantic view, and quite easily would lead people to assume that if their marriage is not steady or does not grow 'better and greater', then this is somehow due to an absence of this (magical?) force. The necessary distinctions between the modern cult of romance and the real meaning of conjugal love can be easily lost, and matters are not improved by strategies such as West's. Both kinds of narratives fail to speak to the real complexities, both rich and deeply challenging, of the common life of contemporary marriage and family.

Thirdly, and related to the first two, these discussions endlessly circle back to the old juridical concern: the indissolubility of sacramental marriage. This is perfectly understandable—the Catholic tradition maintains, both in theory and in pastoral practice, the 'ontological' character of the marriage bond, such that a sacramental marriage validly consented to and consummated could not be dissolved. The teaching was grounded in clear New Testament passages on the issue (Mark 10:2–12; 1 Cor. 7:1–16), though the strict interpretation of these passages became a central contested point between Catholicism and Protestant churches. However, one worries that the tail is wagging the dog—the issue is determining the shape of the theology, one way or the other, either reinforcing or revising the traditional teaching. Certainly this issue is central to an understanding of Christian marriage—the witness of the gospels cannot be denied. However, one could wish for a better appreciation that the phenomenon of contemporary divorce and remarriage is extremely complex. On one side, those sympathetic to softening the traditional view seem to simplify it to be a tragic, unavoidable reality, while those who wish to reinforce the traditional view see it as largely a matter of weakness and selfishness.

From Love to Church: The Ecclesial Location of the Sacramental

These difficulties suggest a need to get beyond the personalist view of marriage, especially in speaking of its sacramentality. In the rest of this chapter, I will highlight developments that move us beyond the impasse, most especially by developing a fully ecclesial and social account of marriage and family as embedded within larger structures and oriented to mission within those structures. In these views, the key move for sacramentality is to shift attention away from 'the bond', and instead pay attention to the *location* of marriage and family as the critical factor in what makes a marriage a 'sacrament'. Sacramentality is not centrally about the love of the couple, but about the couple's (p. 317) placement within the salvation history that is the life of the Church and of their individual baptismal identities as disciples of Jesus Christ. Sacramental marriage is a marriage with a location and a mission—actually, a number of unique and specific missions, missions that may build on nature, but which far surpass it.

We can recognize the need for such a shift by recognizing that both of the above types of marriage theology neglect the primary achievement of Vatican II, which was not *Gaudium et Spes*, but rather the recovery of a full sense of the nature and mission of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) and its central practice, the liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*). These latter documents had as their central concern not 'how do we talk to modern culture?' but rather, 'what is the Church?'. By abandoning the context of the Church and her liturgy as the primary one for speaking about marriage, parties increasingly decided the really important battle was for victory in the culture wars of late modernity. Hence, the above discussions become highly polarized in their attention to particular contested norms, and most importantly continue the pre-Vatican II tendency to identify sacraments at an individual, personal level, rather than seeing sacraments as inherently part of an overall ecclesial 'economy of salvation'. They overcome pre-conciliar juridicism and extrinicism, but they did not overcome sacramental individualism.

We can see what 'ecclesial' means here if we pay attention to the way the council attempts to move beyond sacramental individualism—and thus beyond the traditional focus in matrimony on the 'bond of the couple'. In talking of both the Church herself and of the liturgy, the council Fathers sought to overcome juridical and mechanistic understandings in favour of organic, living realities. In highlighting the Church as 'a kind of sacrament' (*LG* 1), and in dubbing the liturgy as the 'source' and 'summit' of all of the Church's activity as a whole (*SC* 10), the document tied Church and liturgy tightly together, as the particular communal 'economy' by which the world comes to participate in God's salvation.

The catechism reflects this economic view of the sacraments. It views 'liturgy' as the controlling term, as the context within which one comes to understand the secondary term 'sacrament'. Liturgy is 'the participation of the People of God in "the work of God" [John 17:4]' (*CCC* 1069), and it 'makes the Church present' (*CCC* 1071) in order to

'communicate' (via the Holy Spirit) the 'work of salvation' achieved by God in Christ (*CCC* 1076). This entire economy is 'sacramental'. To call it sacramental is to say that, through the Spirit, the liturgy makes the past work of God present, it effectively communicates God's salvation in the present (the key term is 'effectively'), and it makes the future glorious consummation of God's work already available as a 'foretaste' of 'the heavenly liturgy' (*CCC* 1112). Only then are we told: 'The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments' (*CCC* 1113).

As Susan Wood writes, sacraments are well understood as an 'encounter', a salvific encounter, which establishes 'those who participate in them in a relationship of communion with God and communion in faith with one another' (Wood 2007: 345). This relational approach combats *both* mechanistic and individualized accounts of sacrament, and highlights the 'ecclesial meaning' of the sacraments (Wood 2007: 342). Most importantly, the relationship steps into a kind of boundary-space where time and eternity (p. 318) merge, *not* through some sort of individual mysticism, but through the Word and Body and Blood, in which the history of God and the world are remembered, enacted, and anticipated.

Similarly, Herbert McCabe defines a sacrament as 'a revelation of the divine plan of salvation which itself contains and furthers that salvation' (McCabe 1964: 128). What the sacraments 'effect' is that 'together they bring into being the Church, a new kind of reality'. Thus, the marriage of Christians is not 'simply that [the Church] regards a good married life as an occasion for God's grace …'. Rather, 'it is a part of the process of mankind toward God, and this process toward fulfillment in Christ … is called the Church' (McCabe 1964: 127). As in Wood, the sacraments are not an occasion for individual experience, but rather symbolize and enact a new set of (ultimate, eschatological) relationships, the process of which is simply God's economy of salvation for the creation as a whole, and especially for human beings. These new or renewed relationships—ultimately, with God—should be the focus of any account of any of the sacraments.

The theologies of Wood and McCabe follow what Philippe Delhaye maintains is the Vatican II solution to all problems of relating nature and grace: to place 'the relation between nature and grace within the framework of salvation history' (Delhaye 1984: 286). The central problem with personalist theologies, whether existential or nuptial, is treating all of the above as, at best, window dressing for a kind of mystical individualism, with Carmelite (nuptial) or Ignatian (existential) flavourings, which ultimately wants to get beyond all this history and simply have some personal, existential *experience* of God's love. This mystical focus on interior experience is an understandable, even admirable move beyond mechanical and juridical models for the sacrament. However, personalist marriage theologies are not *eschatological*—they view the 'grace' communicated in the sacrament as something timeless and transcendent, reflecting 'a myopic fixation on the extraordinary' (Mattison 2006: 44), rather than as something 'economical'—that is, something comprehensible only when placed within the ongoing and often ordinary economy of God's salvation that is the Church. Perhaps this is because parties on both sides of the discussion are trying too hard to speak about the 'value' of marriage to those who are not participating in this economy! At its worst, this promotes an approach where the task of

the Church is to defend marriage in the *society*, rather than marriage being an aspect of the work (‘liturgy’!) of the *Church*.

Beyond Personalist Models: Domestic Sacramental Theologies

The most promising alternative to existential and nuptial theologies of marriage can be seen in works that might be termed ‘domestic theologies’ of marriage, because of their emphasis on the domus or household as the aim and context of family. Broadly (p. 319) understood, John Paul II’s 1981 *Familiaris Consortio* is a magisterial form for these theologies. The letter focuses on the identity of the family as a whole, saying repeatedly, ‘Family, become what you are’ (*Familiaris Consortio* 17). And it sets out ‘four general tasks’ for the family to realize its fundamental identity as ‘a community of life and love’. The family is to ‘develop an authentic community of persons’ (18), it is to ‘serve life’ by ‘transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person’ (28), it is to be ‘by nature and vocation open to other families and to society’ in undertaking ‘its social role’ (42), and it is to build up ‘the Kingdom of God in history by participating in the life and mission of the Church’ (49). Comparing these four tasks to the traditional ‘ends’ of marriage is instructive. The first two essentially *expand* the traditional ends, by moving the ‘unitive’ beyond just the spouses, and by understanding the ‘procreative’ as a large-scale service which includes education and formation, not simply conception, and which (*Gratissimam Sane* 11, 16) constitutes the realization ‘of the common good of the family’. The third and fourth tasks are newly formulated, taking note of the necessary social vocation of the family, dependent as it is on ‘the civilization of love’, which also depends on it (*Gratissimam Sane* 13), and of marriage as a ‘vocation to holiness’ in the sense not of personal piety but of participation in the larger mission of the Church. Taken together, they offer a remarkable expansion of the relational energies and tasks that are involved in marriage and family. In this way, I have argued elsewhere, they move beyond both the pre-Vatican II juridical model and the post-Vatican II personalist model to suggest a focus on marriage and family as a complex *social practice* within the economy of salvation (Cloutier 2010: 1–26).

A number of recent authors develop this domestic model, including ones not mentioned here (e.g. Bourg 2004, studying ‘domestic church’ language; and Grabowski 2003, focusing on biblical ‘covenant’ language). Jana Bennett uses the oft-maligned Augustine to suggest that his stress on ‘unity’ means that, for him, ‘sacramental marriage is a sign on this earth of our gracious God restoring unity between men and women, which we lost at the fall. Augustine’s vision is therefore about the possibility of restoring two relationships—that between humanity and God, and that between humans’ (Bennett 2008: 77). This is a particularly valuable reinterpretation, due to Augustine’s emphasis on the marital bond sometimes leading to the modern individualist view. She emphasizes that ‘a theology of households rather than a theology of marriage’ is necessary, because the key question ought to be ‘how households are related to the Church, as Household of God’ (Bennett 2008: 5, 29) Our primary membership is in the Household of God, by and through which

God is bringing about unity and salvation for all. Rather than referring first to 'the beginning', Bennett suggests we start with the *end*, the hope of eschatological unity, and from there recover a richer understanding of how, in a sense, 'all are married and all are single' (Bennett 2010: 87).

The shift in location from personal, mystical experience to common eschatological participation mediated by the Church and its liturgy, is also central to David Matzko McCarthy's work. He argues for sacramental marriage as 'a set of practices that do not stand in isolation, but are open to being transformed by God's gracious communion as it is routinized in the social body of the church' (McCarthy 2004: 247). McCarthy's work (p. 320) pays particular attention to how this idea is worked out through countercultural practices of 'open households', which he contrasts with the contemporary secular tendency towards the 'closed household' of the nuclear family, cut off even from extended family, as well as neighbourhood, productive domestic work, and the like (McCarthy 2004: 85–108). This closed household is the perfect unit for the contractual relationships of a market/consumption economy and of liberal individualist politics. But like these forms of economy and politics, the individual is ultimately sovereign over the community in the closed household, and so only via constant hedonistic consumption and romantic 'escapes' (both expensive) can this relationship endure. By contrast, the practices of the open household enact 'love as a set of virtues and dispositions of common life', both locally and (through the mediation of the universal Church) globally. The open household endures not because of an original love somehow constantly 'fed' by consumption, but because of the bonds of love that it produces, which also then transform the individuals involved (McCarthy 2004: 246).

Julie Hanlon Rubio has also taken this focus on the household seriously, developing in her most recent work a set of five concrete practices for the Christian family. She argues that '[t]he genius of Catholic teaching on the family is its refusal to limit families by telling them to simply focus on themselves' (Rubio (2010: 30). Her emphasis is on the language of vocation; she sees the sacramental dimension of marriage as something families should 'embrace and actively live out as a vocation … a manifestation of the modern Catholic understanding of lay vocation in the world'. Her practices—fidelity, eating, sharing possessions, community service, and common prayer—highlight everyday choices faced by nearly all families, explaining how they might be lived out in terms of this lay vocation to discipleship.

The work of Lisa Sowle Cahill suggests many of the same themes. She insists that:

> The Christian family and its family values are not the same as the natural family with its often exaggerated values of family security and advancement; nor is the Christian family the same as the family of modern liberal individualism, where commitments are decided and defined by choice. Understanding the family as domestic church requires understanding 'church' properly
>
> (Cahill 2000: 134).

In paying particular attention to how the New Testament and early Christianity sought to critique many cultural family standards of the time, the 'new family' of the Church often required that Christian be 'social non-conformists,' following Jesus' messages of the 'reversal of standard social relationships' (Cahill 2000: 30–38). The key message of the New Testament for sexuality and marriage 'is to place the relevant experiences and values within a transformed world view and way of life', which challenges 'ancient economic assumptions, Jewish purity concerns, and the Greco-Roman family …' (Cahill 1995: 274–275). Her work maintains a complex balance, accepting a natural law perspective while also insisting that the supernatural character of Christian marriage may be socially *challenging*, rather than socially *conservative* (Cahill 1995: 274; 1996: 72, 110–114).

(p. 321) Finally, my own work pays particular attention to the various narratives within which we construe relationships of love, romance, and marriage. Our culture offers numerous, often implicit 'stories' not only about particular lovers, but even more importantly of how marriage and sexuality can be deemed a 'success' or not—for example, stories influenced by socio-biology or by contemporary psychology. I argue that even in these stories, there are implicit 'god stories', which indicate how success in marriage is normed by larger understandings of the shape of the world and the ultimate end of the person (Cloutier 2008: 58–60). The task for sacramental marriage is to locate itself within 'God's story', most importantly through resisting idolatry (including of marriage and romance itself), facing and forgiving sin, and seeking our place within the ongoing work of God's kingdom (Cloutier 2008: 209–219).

The domestic model is able to avoid key difficulties that plague the other models. Most importantly, the model is able to clearly differentiate itself from the dominant, romanticized 'soul mate' ideal of Western culture (Popenoe and Whitehead 2001). In all the authors listed above, there is a desire to resist what Bennett calls the 'cultural frenzy' over marriage (Bennett 2008: 3). While they identify in passing obvious problems involving lust, infidelity, and promiscuity, they recognize that a truly 'positive' account of the sacramentality of marriage will not come by emphasizing the standard cultural antidote to promiscuity: 'falling in love'. Instead, they recognize 'romantic frenzy' as also dangerous—as many studies have noted, most marriages that fail do not do so because of serious conflicts such as spousal abuse, but rather because 'the love has died' or some such claim (e.g. Amato and Booth 1997; Cherlin 2009). The alternative is to need to recognize that Christian sacramental marriage is FOR something—children, yes, but for something even beyond that.

But more importantly, these domestic models offer us ways to construe the liturgical and sacramental character of marriage that are notably non-mystical. Because they are not focused exclusively on the spousal bond, they do not run into the problem of how human affection and divine grace, how nature and supernature, how eros and agape, need to be related. Instead, they enable a properly ecclesial and eschatological mediation of the complex ways of grace. 'Grace' or 'the sacrament' in the domestic model names (as it must) the salvific relationship of God to humans. This relationship, however, is not one of immediate mystical encounter, but rather of socially mediated development over time, ori-

ented towards God's purposes for the whole human race, accomplished through and in the whole body of the Church. The relationship of human and divine happens through a community with a history (i.e. the Church). The sacrament, then, can name the ways in which these ordinary human relationships of family are taken up, healed, and reoriented within this larger history and community of God's purposes. As Rubio notes in discussing the marriage liturgy, 'the new liturgical guidelines ask couples to situate the celebration of their marriage within the context of a participating community of family and friends gathered as one family in the church' (Rubio 2003: 38).

This model can then also provide an alternative way of speaking to some of the concerns of contemporary culture—all four noted here are difficult to discuss with personalist language alone. McCarthy's focus on open households reintroduces the importance (p. 322) of neighbourly and larger community, thus helping to identify how 'love matches' may be hard on the poor and disadvantaged, explaining the peculiar phenomenon that divorce happens less frequently among higher income and more educated households, even though such households frequently hold weaker religious values (Cherlin 2009). The importance of placing spousal love within a larger community also recovers what Coontz suggests is one factor which held back the 'full force' of sexual revolution: the presence of informal, custom-based norms that protected and guided couples both before and after marriage (Coontz 2005: 307). Wendell Berry eloquently points out that only viable, strong communities can 'enforce decency without litigation' and teach the necessary qualities of 'respect, responsibility, sexual discipline, fidelity, [and] the practice of love' (Berry 1993: 120–122). The model further suggests ways of integrating Catholic sexual and social teaching against consumerism, particularly by restoring to the household some 'productive' tasks lost when waged work outside the home became economically dominant. The productive family serves and is served by an economy capable of 'gratuitousness' (Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate* 34) that creates 'internal forms of solidarity and mutual trust' which the market economy cannot provide (35). Further, the model also tends to put primary emphasis on function and practice, rather than, as Cahill writes, 'regularity of form' (Cahill 2000: xi). While upholding the traditional standards for marriage, the emphasis on function allows for those who have experienced various kinds of marital and familial failure to be able to find redemptive participation in the sacrament. (This is not to imply a definite 'position' on divorce and remarriage—it varies among these authors—but all agree that the necessity is to get 'behind' this problem to the deeper issues of which it is a symptom.)

Finally, the domestic model is particularly important in light of the eschatology offered in Pope Benedict XVI's *Spe salvi* (2007). He is gently critical (*Spe salvi* 10–15) of a kind of otherworldly individualism that took over Christian eschatology in the modern era, and puts his imprimatur squarely on the work of Henri de Lubac, whose *Catholicism* makes an extended argument for the recovery of 'the common destiny of man', and for Catholicism's central feature to be the sacramental embodiment of this process of common, shared salvation. A domestic understanding of marriage and family helps us particularly in this vision, since it makes us recognize that our marriages and families are not simply a matter of 'personal salvation' and personal happiness, but a matter of mission

within God's larger plan … again, not simply for us as individuals, but for the whole of God's creation.

What About Love? Reintegrating the Spousal Bond in the Church

These domestic theologies can sometimes seem disappointing in their inattention to the spousal bond. To be fair, all these authors do spend time integrating this personalist (p. 323) theme into their work. Rubio's recent book includes a chapter that pays direct attention to marital sex, highlighting qualities such as vulnerability, sacrifice, and bodily belonging that are central to the overall practice of marriage (Rubio 2010: 105–118). McCarthy explains that 'the wonderment of romance has its place', but that it can ultimately flourish only as a 'subplot' within 'the broader context of practices, goods, and ends' that the affectionate household provides (McCarthy 2004: 161, 164). The daily common work of the household and neighbourhood 'make possible an intimate knowledge of others, abiding trust, and willful affection', so that the powerful-but-fleeting moments of 'romance' can find their stability. Put simply, romance is lovely, so long as it is not understood to be the *foundation* of marriage and family.

Thus, domestic theologies of marriage should be seen as offering a framework which can incorporate aspects of the personalist and juridical models, and yet subordinating them to the larger sacramental/liturgical relationship of God and the world, through Christ and the Church. How so? The importance of the juridical model is analogous to the importance of laws within any society, including the Church. They enable maintaining objective goodness in the face of subjective temptation, and even more importantly, they enable trust and stability in situations of collective action (which marriage surely is). The key example would be the marriage vow itself, an objective promise which ought to be maintained in the face of personal frustration, and which spouses and children can and should be able to rely on in planning their futures. Marriage is not 'just a piece of paper' for any of these authors.

The value of the personalist model can be seen in the way in which spousal and parental love involves a kind of 'you-ness,' reminiscent of the 'scandalous' particularity of the election of Israel and the singular person of Jesus Christ (Cloutier 2008: 175). The marriage vow is one shared between unique persons, with particular names, and the commitment to love is not simply an abstract one, but one that honours, celebrates, and deepens personal identity. One might consider this as analogous to the importance of personal vocation in the Christian life. While Christians are obviously called to love *all* others as neighbours, this call remains abstract (and overwhelming) unless it is specified in unique ways. These unique calls, of course, always ought to proceed within the general 'rules' of the Christian life. And more importantly, they ought to be seen as contributing somehow to the overall 'call' that Christ issues to the Church, the general vocation of the Christian community. Yet these broader unities are meant to enable, not squelch, particular vocations. So, too, the general framework of the relationships established and promised by the

present and future marriage of Christ and the Church can both serve and be served by personal relationships of deep love.

However, a genuine ‘spirituality of marriage’ might also emerge by attention to the dynamics of the theological virtue of charity in the personal development of the spouses in particular. This is crucial if we are to differentiate between personal love as erotic or sexual feeling and the personal love described above, involving a long-term mutual gift of self. What the spouses give to one another, and what they then pass on to their children, is not a love of possession and personal delight (though a degree of security and joy is certainly appropriate); instead, they primarily give of love of total acceptance, a (p. 324) love that involves a ‘making space’, as Herbert McCabe (2002: 10) describes it. He compares this to God’s primal act of creation, which ‘lets creation be’, and therefore enables it to grow into itself. So, too, to love others is ‘to give them themselves or we can say it is to give them nothing—the priceless gift of nothing, which means space in which to move freely, to grow and become themselves’. Given a fundamentally relational understanding of the notion of ‘person’, we can come to recognize in our lives the countless ways in which becoming ourselves was not an escape from community and from others, but rather a kind of being with others where we did not have to play the role they demand, but rather could discover our own role. For many of us, our primary experience with this kind of love is genuine friendship, and it is not surprising that, in an age of the equality of the sexes, so many people seek to marry their ‘best friend’. If the cultural desire to marry a soul mate is dangerous, the cultural desire to see marriage as a deep friendship of equals is quite promising. In prizing friendship, we acknowledge that we need others to be ourselves, and what others ‘give’ (in addition to many concrete and obvious gifts) is simply the space of acceptance.

This spirituality of marital charity is furthered by Pope Benedict XVI. In his encyclical on love, Benedict carefully describes the dynamics of eros and agape, emphasizing that the joyful ‘ascending’ we associate with eros is not erased by Christianity (or else it would collapse into a dualistic ‘spiritualism’). Rather, he indicates that agape (charity) ‘purifies’ eros (*Deus caritas est* 5). In particular, it purges the competitive possessiveness that dominates in relationships of eros. Eros, we must admit, drives us to grasp and possess the other; and if we are on the ‘receiving’ end, we may use eros as a kind of power to ‘get what we want’. In this way, agape’s ‘descending’ character, a character of letting go, of attending to the other, of replacing power with grace, is needed. ‘Purification’ is indicative, of course, of the way in which our tendencies to love are contaminated by sin. But such purification should not simply be seen as a corrective; it is, in fact, the mature, deeper form of what it means to love another. It is not just cleaned-up eros, but grown-up eros.

I have suggested elsewhere that the effects of the virtue of charity, described by Aquinas, might be helpfully applied to the life of marriage in family (Cloutier 2007: 261–264). Aquinas (*ST* II–II, qq. 28–33) describes three inward and three outward effects. Married couples ought to experience familial love as tending towards inner joy, peace, and mercy. Joy is not to be confused with a facile happiness or pleasure; it is something deeper and more stable (e.g. Pinckaers 2001: 76–81). Peace is not simply ‘concord’, but a deeper

sense of ‘union’. And mercy is a matter of feeling distress at the other’s distress. The outward effects—beneficence, almsgiving, and fraternal correction—are all seen as variation on ‘giving alms’. Each involves a kind of active sacrificing in the act of gift-giving, a seeking to supply what the other lacks. Making each other happy (beneficence), relieving each other’s needs (almsgiving—think here perhaps of doing the tasks or chores of the other), and each helping the other become a better person (correction) are all a matter of giving. And they are delicate matters, as is especially true of the last—though we know from experience that the true friend is the one who can correct us without tearing us down or diminishing us. Aquinas’s reflection on charity’s effects, like (p. 325) Benedict’s and McCabe’s analyses, help us recover a sense of what it really means to ‘love another’ in ways that are not primarily focused on romantic attraction.

Conclusion

How does the combination of domestic theology and an emphasis on personal growth in charity address the vexed issues of Church and culture with which marriage and sexual ethics are usually preoccupied? As Julie Rubio notes with regard to debates over contraception, these issues can be constructively engaged only within ‘a new way of doing sexual ethics that focuses less on argument about norms and more on dialogue within a diverse Christian community about practices’ (Rubio 2005: 271). Such a dialogue can identify ‘areas of shared concern’, which then enable ‘respectful agreement and mutual correction’ (Rubio 2005: 291). As I mentioned earlier, many of these controversies settle into an intractable conflict between norms derived from traditional natural law definitions and contemporary experience. There is no doubt that the domestic, ecclesial model of marriage presented here moves the discussion away from appeals to *either* norms or personal experience as foundational. As Pope Francis has recently stated, the communication of the Church’s teachings ‘cannot be obsessed with the transmission of a disjointed multitude of doctrines to be imposed insistently’, but must ‘talk about them in a context’ (Francis 2013). That fundamental context for the Church’s teachings on marriage and family is its placement of our sexual lives within the larger household of God and the work that household is commissioned to do. Three final observations are necessary to address this context well.

First, the sacraments are not snake-handling. They do not involve what might be called ‘magical’ evocations of the supernatural. Indeed, they are remarkably ordinary in their basic materials. If this is true, we should not expect marriage to deviate from this. It should be something that brings the supernatural out of the natural. Grace builds on nature (though in sometimes surprising ways). Hence, theologies which suggest that sacramental marriage can somehow ‘contradict’ a natural order are at least on some thin ice. It is no easy task to define ‘natural’, although analogies with eating and drinking are probably the best place to start.

Secondly, regardless of the quarrels that may arise in discussing what is ‘natural’, the scriptural witness as a whole indicates that the relationship tends toward *exclusivity* and

permanency. In these ways, it mirrors the key aspects of the God/People of God, and Christ/Church relationships, which remain the central biblical analogies for sacramental marriage (*Familiaris consortio* 12–13). While there are common arguments that appeal to 'nature' in favour of polygamy or serial monogamy, it would be mistaken to eliminate the overall direction of the scriptural story. Yet such criteria can also be dimly perceived in terms of nature itself. Insofar as we as humans never experience something like 'pure nature', particularly not in a post-Christian culture, we can simply recognize all the aspects of our experience—and experience that may be common to many without (p. 326) explicit theological commitments—the value to spouses and children of exclusivity and permanency.

Finally, within the household of God, celibacy is privileged (*Familiaris consortio* 16). What 'privileged' means here is difficult. Traditionally, it has meant that in 'objective' terms, vows of celibacy involved a state of greater perfection (= completion) than the married state. In the more complex ecclesiology of *Lumen gentium* (40), where *all* 'of whatever rank or status are called to the fullness of the Christian life and the perfection of charity', one could imagine other ways to 'privilege' celibacy. One is simply by acknowledging its *equal* worth and value—now, as in Jesus' time, it is criticized by the larger culture, and even within the Church. Another is indicating how the household of God uniquely depends on the service and vocations of those called to celibacy. True, all play important roles. But it would be worthwhile for the fruits of this call for the life of the Church to be identified more clearly and (especially) more attractively. Without this kind of highly positive narration of celibacy within the larger Household, the tendency will be (understandably) to view marriage as a kind of personal 'right', a very important good which then may be (in this view, unjustly) withheld from some in particular situations (e.g. homosexuals, divorced persons). This view is unintentionally fostered by ecclesial campaigns to 'defend marriage' in the larger culture, and to direct the vast majority of its pastoral work towards those who are married. The effect, of course, is not only a decline in religious vocations, but just as importantly a frustration on the part of those not married that they do not belong … until they are married.

These observations taken together at least gesture towards some of the controversial issues, without pretending to solve neatly what are evidently messy controversies with which the Church will be dealing for some time. This chapter repeatedly indicates that, so long as these controversies are engaged from within Western 'culture wars', the Church's genuine theology of marriage and family becomes impoverished, and the Church itself is reduced to a (quite weak) political actor or as an (easily substitutable) therapeutic support mechanism for the pursuit of private interests. But the Church is neither Oprah nor Obama; the Church is 'a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind' (*LG* 1). It guides us to our ultimate end of shared, communal participation in the divine life, as one humanity. Sacramental marriage both signs and effects this ultimate end.

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Mission and Evangelization

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This chapter examines the theology of mission and evangelization in the Catholic Church. It begins with a brief overview of how mission developed in the Catholic tradition up to the twentieth century, with particular emphasis on the biblical grounding for a universal mission and the crucial transitions the early Church made from being a Jewish movement to a Gentile-inclusive movement that engaged with and accommodated itself to Greco-Roman culture. It then considers developments in the period leading up to and including the Second Vatican Council, along with the 'missionary crisis' and other challenges following Vatican II. Finally, it discusses important continuities and changes in the Catholic theology of mission and evangelization and describes the characteristics of this theology today.

Keywords: mission, evangelization, Catholic Church, Greco-Roman culture, Second Vatican Council, missionary crisis, Vatican II, Catholic theology

> 'The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature.'
>
> (*Ad Gentes*, 2)

TO give an account of the theology of mission and evangelization in the Catholic Church is no easy task. Mission has existed from the very beginning of the Church and the call to spread the gospel is found in every age, but a theology of mission—a sustained theological reflection on mission—is of relatively late vintage. Scholars of the history of mission normally date the beginning of 'missiology' (sustained historical and theological reflection on mission) in the Protestant world to Gustav Warneck (1834–1910), and in the Catholic world to Josef Schmidlin (1876–1944). Consequently, I will offer only a brief overview of how mission developed in the Catholic tradition up to the twentieth century, noting especially the biblical grounding for a universal mission and the crucial transitions the early Church made from being a Jewish movement to a Gentile-inclusive movement that engaged with and accommodated itself to Greco-Roman culture.

For a specific theology of mission and evangelization, developments in the twentieth century leading up to and including the Second Vatican Council (1962–5), along with the crises and challenges following the council, are paramount. It is fair to say that mission in the Catholic Church at the beginning of the twenty-first century is understood and practised quite differently than mission was at the beginning of the twentieth century. Important continuities exist but there have been enormous changes. Tracing these developments in a theology of mission and evangelization and identifying both continuities and new departures is the aim of this chapter.

(p. 330) Development of Mission in the Catholic Tradition

Mission is deeply embedded in the gospels and letters of the New Testament. The overall missionary character of these documents reflects an evangelistic mindset in the early Church and shows that mission was not an added extra but was part and parcel of the very existence of the Church (Bosch 1991: 15–178). Within this wider corpus certain 'missionary mandate' texts have always provided the central thrust for mission. Matthew 28:19, 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', has perennially played a major role, but the parallel text in Mark 16:15, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation', has been equally significant. Luke ends his gospel with the charge that 'repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in [Jesus'] name to all nations' (Luke 24:47), while John presents Jesus praying to the Father: 'As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world … so that the world may believe that you have sent me' (John 17:18, 21). The Acts of the Apostles provides a hugely influential account of how this call to bring the gospel to all nations unfolded in the first generations of the Church, and the Apostle Paul wrote consistently and passionately about his desire and obligation to preach the gospel. In short, the New Testament writings reveal that the Church was missionary from the beginning, and as the Church through the ages read and meditated on the Scriptures, the summons to mission was continually called to mind and renewed.

We do not find a clearly articulated theology of mission in the early Church, parallel to developed theologies of, for example, the goodness of creation, the divinity of the Son, or the nature of sin and the fall. This may be because there was no great controversy surrounding mission—mission was simply carried out and the Church made the necessary adjustments to accommodate new situations. Still, we can locate certain crucial decisions and transitions that shaped the Church's approach to mission in decisive ways. The first critical decision was to allow Gentiles to be full members of the Church without requiring full conversion to Judaism (Acts 15). By this decision the early Church not only confirmed the mission to the nations (the Gentiles), but also opened the way for the Church to become planted *in* all the nations. One did not have to leave one's people and be joined to Israel through the keeping of the Law; now one could become part of 'spiritual' Israel

through baptism into Christ and still remain within one's own people (Rom. 2:29). This universalizing step was enormously significant for the growth of the Church and the development of missionary strategy (for surveys of the history of mission see Bevans and Schroeder 2004: 74–280 and Bosch 1991: 181–345).

A second decisive transition took place in the encounter between the Church and wider Greco-Roman society. This encounter was varied and complex and is not easy to describe in simple terms. While maintaining its own boundaries and distinctive practices, the Church plainly opted to engage the wider culture and attempted to harmonize (p. 331) the best elements of that culture with its own beliefs. The Christian Apologists of the second century AD give ample testimony to this effort (for example the *Apologies* of Justin Martyr). In the fourth century, Basil the Great instructs Christian students how they can benefit from the classic literature of the pagan world while at the same time rejecting what is false or ignoble (Basil 1970). Christians still debate how effective and faithful this accommodation to Greco-Roman culture was, but it is undeniable that it was the first great effort at what we now call 'inculturation' of the gospel and that it provided a kind of template for future engagement of the gospel with others cultures. Similar inculturation of the gospel occurred in Syriac-speaking areas, in Persia, Armenia, and other kingdoms to the East and South, but we know far less about how the gospel permeated these cultures.

A third notable transition concerns the main vehicles for the spread of mission *after* the period of the early Church. In its formative years the Church appears to have spread through a variety of means. The sending out of mission teams (Paul and Barnabas) played a decisive role, but the Church also spread and was planted by those engaged in business and trade (e.g. Lydia, Acts 16:14), and through the normal migration of people. As far as we can glean, mission in the early Church involved both full-time missionaries and many laypeople engaged in normal trades and travel.

When we come to the end of the early Church period (400 and afterwards) and to the beginning of the Middle Ages in the West (Byzantium in the East), the primary agents for ongoing mission are the monks, and later in the West, the various religious orders. Beginning in the sixteenth century, with the opening of the 'new world' and the Orient, the missionary effort was spearheaded by the mendicant orders (the Franciscans and Dominicans) and the Jesuits, along with their third-order layhelpers. Priests, monks, and members of religious orders (both men and women), often under the direct sponsorship of the pope (or the patriarch of Constantinople), become the main vehicles for extending the mission to unevangelized nations. This pattern would continue relatively unbroken for the Catholic Church into the twentieth century. As we shall see, the re-engagement of the laity in mission and the revitalization of local mission in the late twentieth century move us back closer to the model of mission that we find in the early Church.

The Period Leading up to Vatican II

The papal teaching on mission in the first half of the twentieth century gives us a window onto how mission was then being conceived and carried out, and what issues were emerging. In the nineteenth century, following a long period of missionary stagnation, the Catholic Church experienced a season of explosive missionary growth. With the help of strong papal encouragement numerous missionary religious orders of both men and women sprang up, the end result being that 'the approximate number of Catholic missionaries worldwide jumped from three hundred in 1800 to seventy-five hundred in (p. 332) 1920' (Bevans and Schroeder 2004: 226). It was into this context that the popes directed their missionary teaching and directives in the first half of the twentieth century.

Three papal letters are especially useful for assessing a Catholic understanding of mission. The first, *Maximum illud* from Benedict XV in 1919, speaks about mission in traditional terms. Mission is understood as being directed to the nations (*ad gentes*) that have never heard the gospel message, with a strongly expressed sense of obligation to evangelize the unreached peoples and to win souls for Christ (*Maximum* 7). The clear assumption is that mission workers will be celibate men and women (*Maximum* 12), with the laity supporting mission work through prayer, financial contribution, and fostering vocations for mission (*Maximum* 31–34). The central pastoral aim of the letter, however, is a keen concern for training local people so that the local Church can carry on without foreign missionaries (*Maximum* 15–19).

In *Rerum ecclesiae* (1926), Pius XI follows Benedict XV's approach quite closely, with one development worthy of note. Pius emphasizes the value of charitable works accompanying mission, and encourages missionaries to attend specially to the poor who are often the most ready to receive the gospel. This is not yet the 'preferential option for the poor' that will emerge after the Second Vatican Council, but a door is opened in this direction.

With Pius XII's encyclical letter, *Evangelii praecones* in 1951, new concerns and orientations begin to appear. He confirms the traditional view of mission as consisting of the proclamation of the gospel and the establishment of the Church (*Evangelii* 22), but hints at a wider concept of mission that includes promoting culture, peace, and justice among nations (*Evangelii* 23). Works of charity, Pius says, are essential but not sufficient, 'for in the first place there must be justice which should prevail and be put into practice' (*Evangelii* 51). Strikingly, he opens up a new role for the laity in mission, not just indirectly through prayer and financial support, but as active workers in the mission field (*Evangelii* 37). Finally, Pius XII begins to address the issue of what will later be called 'inculturation', that is, the need to respect and make use of what is 'naturally good, just or beautiful' in a native culture (*Evangelii* 56). The promotion of justice, the direct involvement of the laity, and the need for inculturation—all these will receive significant development at the Second Vatican Council.

The Second Vatican Council

Background

The Second Vatican Council's *Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church* (*Ad Gentes*), published in 1965, was perhaps the most developed theology of mission and evangelization ever produced by the Catholic Church. Alongside this were other important statements touching directly on mission found in the Decree on the Laity, *Apostolicam* *(p. 333)* *Actuositatem* (*AA*), and in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (*GS*). Mission, however, was not really a central concern at the council, and so this teaching on mission was left largely in the shadows and remained undeveloped for some years. Still, the principles laid down in *Ad Gentes* (*AG*) have proved immensely important for the subsequent development of mission and so demand our close attention.

Trinitarian Foundation for Mission

This is arguably the most important single statement in the document: 'The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father' (*AG* 2). By deciding to situate a theology of mission in the missions of the Son and Spirit, the council decisively located mission in the very nature of the Triune God and his work in the world. In other words, mission is to be conceived not only as a practical matter or as simply a response of obedience to Christ's command, but as part of the Church's very nature, and as an expression the full unfolding of God's action in the world. Previous to the council 'the theological basis for the Church's missionary activity was, as a rule, the *missionary mandate* of the risen Lord' (Wolanin 1996: 49). Now it is to be understood more deeply as having both its origin and final goal in the Triune God.

It is difficult to exaggerate the implications of the trinitarian origination of mission and evangelization. The Triune God comes to be recognized as the primary agent of mission; what the Church does is simply the extension of the mission of the Son and the Spirit for the salvation and sanctification of the created order. Without minimizing human action in any respect, *Ad Gentes* positioned the Father, Son, and Spirit at the centre of mission and required the Church to reconsider mission from the perspective of the entire narrative of salvation grounded in the Bible. Conversely, a Trinitarian theology of mission requires the Church to reconsider all of Christian life from the perspective of mission. If the Church is missionary 'by her very nature' then all aspects of Christian life—theology, pastoral practice, the sacraments, priestly ministry, the laity—need to be understood as having a missionary dimension.

Broader Definition of Mission

In *Ad Gentes* we begin to see a broader, more comprehensive idea of mission emerge. 'The mission of the Church' is that activity which makes the Church 'fully present' to all peoples and which leads them on a 'firm and free road to full participation in the mystery of Christ' (*AG* 5). This broader notion of mission entails the witness of a genuine Christian life (*AG* 11), and includes striving for dignity, peace, and justice in temporal (p. 334) affairs and the works of charity (*AG* 12). Nonetheless, the council underlines that proclamation of the gospel and entrance into the Church through baptism are the 'chief means' by which mission is advanced (*AG* 6), and that direct proclamation can never be forfeited:

> It is not enough that the Christian people be present and be organized in a given nation, nor is it enough to carry out an apostolate by way of example. They are organized for this purpose, they are present for this, to announce Christ to their non-Christian fellow-citizens by word and example, and to aid them toward the full reception of Christ
>
> (*AG* 15).

One signpost of this broader concept of mission is the appearance of a new term. Alongside the more traditional terms, 'mission' and 'apostolate', 'evangelization' makes an entrance at Vatican II and becomes increasingly the preferred term for describing the missionary activity of the Church (before Vatican II the term appeared only once in encyclicals on mission—see *Evangelli* 19—but in *Ad Gentes* the term is used nineteen times). Though Catholics only began to use this term relatively recently—the term was first used in evangelical Protestant circles in the late nineteenth century—it has now become the standard term in Catholic parlance (and is common in the papal documentation of Paul VI and John Paul II).

Mission and Salvation

The council also had to wrestle with an apparent incompatibility: how can we reconcile on the one hand the admission that salvation is in principle open to all people, even those who have never heard and responded to the gospel—which the council plainly acknowledged (*LG* 16; *AG* 7)—and on the other the ongoing requirement to announce the good news? If someone can potentially be saved apart from an explicit response of faith to the gospel message, is mission traditionally conceived now passé? *Ad Gentes* firmly answers this question by upholding the necessity of mission, grounded in the saving purpose of God for the human race:

> This missionary activity derives its reason from the will of God, 'who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. 2:4) … Therefore, all must be converted to [Christ], made known by the Church's preaching, and all must be incorporated into him by baptism and into the Church which is his body … Therefore though God in ways known to himself can lead those inculpably ignorant of the gospel to find that faith without which it is impossible to please

> him (Heb. 11:6), yet a necessity lies upon the Church (1 Cor. 9:16), and at the same time a sacred duty, to preach the gospel. And hence missionary activity today as always retains its power and necessity
>
> (*AG* 7).

In the post-conciliar period this issue will be revisited, and the argument within the Catholic Church *against* the need for mission as traditionally conceived will intensify.

(p. 335) Inculturation

Two further developments in a theology of mission at the council are worthy of note. The first is an expansion of what the Church had traditionally said about intersection of the gospel and human culture. The preaching of the gospel and the practices of the Church do not negate the elements present in various human cultures, but they purify them and raise them up, holding on to what is good. 'And so, whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men, or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various peoples, not only is not lost, but is healed, uplifted, and perfected for the glory of God' (*AG* 9). In other words, human culture apart from Christ is not barren of his presence, but already possesses 'seeds' that can be cultivated as the gospel brings what is latent to full fruition (*AG* 22).

The Role of the Laity

Vatican II opened the doors wide to the activity of the laity in many spheres including that of mission and evangelization. The council offered a theology of the laity that grounds their activity in the threefold office of priest, prophet, and king: 'But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world' (*AA* 2). Specifically, the missionary role of the laity is directed to the 'evangelization and sanctification' of all people and to 'the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the gospel' (*AA* 2). By placing the renewal of the temporal order within the sphere of 'mission', the council not only broadened the scope of the Church's missionary activity but fully engaged and commissioned the laity to be active in this sphere and cleared the path for what will later be called the New Evangelization.

In summary, the Second Vatican Council put mission and the missionary activity of the Church at the centre of things. By asserting that the 'pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature' and that missionary activity is 'the greatest and holiest task of the Church' (*AG* 2, 29), and through a greatly expanded theology of mission and a broadened understanding of the scope of mission, the council would seem to have stacked the deck for a new season of missionary flourishing. It is more than a little ironic that in the years immediately following the council the vision for mission was blurred and the impulse for mission blunted.

The Post-Conciliar Period: Challenge and Response

Among many factors that contributed to the 'missionary crisis' (Bevans and Schroeder 2004: 251) following Vatican II, three primary causes may be identified. The first was a (p. 336) call for liberation from unjust social structures as the new locus for the Church's mission, especially in Latin America. The second was a new theology of religions that raised serious doubts about the need for mission. And the third was a post-colonial critique that called into question, and often rejected, the content and methods of the Church's traditional approach to mission in developing countries (for this threefold analysis see Müller 1996). It was in the crucible of these challenges that the Catholic Church's theology of mission and evangelization was tested, purified, and refined in the post-conciliar period.

Theologies of Liberation

The conviction that missionary activity should include working for justice and human development was already present in Pius XII's missionary encyclical, *Evangelii Praecones* (1951), and received much greater impetus at Vatican II (*AG* 11–12). But it was during the gathering of the Latin American bishops in 1968 at Medellin that the topic of 'liberation' became front and centre, catalyzing a profusion of writing on the subject of liberation in the 1970s from a distinctively Latin American perspective. The watershed work was written by Gustavo Gutiérrez (1971), but a wide array of theologians—including Leonardo Boff, Juan Luis Segundo, Jon Sobrino, and José Miguez Bonino—attempted to express a theology of liberation that entailed a new way of conceiving the mission of the Church in the world (see also Chapter 45 by Goizueta in this volume).

To summarize the main tenets of these theologies of liberation is notoriously difficult, not least because they differ from one another in notable ways. They propose to begin from the existential situation of the poor and oppressed, and to interpret the gospel in terms of the experience of the poor and their liberation from unjust structures and institutions. Narratives from the Old Testament, especially the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt, provide the primary paradigms for liberation from contemporary forms of oppression. Sin is viewed not merely or primarily in terms of individual moral action, but in terms of social structures of oppression (Chopp 1997). Many liberation theologians make explicit use of both Marxist social analysis and philosophy of history, seeking to apply them in ways they believe serve the cause of the gospel among the poor.

The topic of liberation theology was prominent during third synod of bishops (1974) that took up 'Evangelization in the Modern World' as its topic. This in turn led to the promulgation of Paul VI's apostolic letter, *Evangelii nuntiandi* in 1975 (the term 'evangelization' becomes predominant in this letter, appearing 108 times, while 'mission' appears just twenty-four times). Calling this letter a 'meditation on evangelization' (*Evangelii n.* 5), his stated goal is to encourage mission 'in this time of uncertainty and confusion,' in order 'to

make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel to the people of the twentieth century' (*Evangelii n.* 1, 2). The opening salvo of the letter is a vibrant declaration of the validity of the Church's mission to proclaim the gospel that sets the stage for all that follows:

(p. 337)

> The presentation of the Gospel message is not an optional contribution for the Church. It is the duty incumbent on her by the command of the Lord Jesus, so that people can believe and be saved. This message is indeed necessary. It is unique. It cannot be replaced. It does not permit either indifference, syncretism or accommodation. It is a question of people's salvation.
>
> (*Evangelii n.* 5)

With respect to the topic of liberation theology, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* is a carefully constructed letter that delicately positions new insights on human liberation within a wider framework that upholds the need for mission, for conversion, and for the role of the Church. And so Paul says that the good news of the gospel is 'liberation from everything that oppresses' the human race, 'but which is above all liberation from sin and the Evil One, in the joy of knowing God and being known by Him' (*Evangelii n.* 9). Famously, Paul broadens the sphere of evangelization to include more than just proclamation and sacramental initiation (*Evangelii n.* 17). The gospel kerygma is a crucial and central aspect of evangelization, but it is only one aspect of the entire evangelizing activity of the Church (*Evangelii n.* 22). Paul introduces the idea of 'evangelizing culture and cultures', while constantly returning to the need for proclaiming the gospel if human cultures are to be truly evangelized (*Evangelii n.* 20). As a summary statement of the full work of evangelization, he writes:

> Evangelization, as we have said, is a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative. These elements may appear to be contradictory, indeed mutually exclusive. In fact they are complementary and mutually enriching. Each one must always be seen in relationship with the others
>
> (*Evangelii n.* 24).

Paul goes on to address the issue of evangelization and human liberation more concretely. Speaking about the profound links between evangelization and human advancement (*Evangelii n.* 29), he rejects at the same time the temptation to reduce the gospel to a purely temporal project; the Church's contribution to human liberation is gutted if proclamation of salvation in Christ is neglected. Importantly, Paul asserts that the Church 'links human liberation and salvation in Jesus Christ, but she never identifies them' (*Evangelii n.* 35), and he firmly rejects the use of violence as a path to liberation that some were proposing (*Evangelii n.* 37). In sum, Paul widens a theology of mission and evangelization

to include new insights about the Church's mission to the poor, but at the same time he adjusts or rejects certain aspects of liberation theology that were emerging (for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith's responses to Liberation Theology in the 1980s see Chapter 45 by Goizueta in this volume).

The fall of the Communist governments in Eastern Europe in 1989, and the evident failure of Marxism to transform society, dealt a serious blow to the hopes of many that a theology of liberation was the way of the future. But the challenges presented by these theologies of liberation nonetheless provoked the wider Church to examine the (p. 338) relationship between mission and human liberation, and led to a broadened conception of mission. One concrete result is the widespread acceptance of the phrase 'preferential option for the poor' as a watchword for Catholic mission.

Theologies of Religion and the Issue of Universalism

An even more severe challenge to mission in the post-conciliar period came from various theologies of religion offering a spectrum of positions that called into question the need for and the validity of mission (for an overview of the various positions taken in contemporary theology of religions see D'Costa 2004: 3–54). Was the old paradigm of 'preaching the gospel' and 'winning souls for Christ' now outdated? If God could bring people to salvation by means that did not include formal entrance into the Church—which Vatican II specifically allowed—then perhaps the 'mission' of the Church was simply to help people of other faiths live their own religious practices well. Was the Church, then, really necessary for salvation, and should the Church any longer seek to make converts from other religions? Was explicit faith in Christ necessary for salvation, or were there alternate paths to salvation, orchestrated by God's Spirit, that existed within the practices of other religions? More radically, is salvation really an issue at all, given the assumption that all (or nearly all but a few of the most hardened) will eventually be saved? A tacit universalism—that all in the end will be saved by the mercy of God—functions more or less openly in these various theologies of religion, and had a profound impact on the views of the laity (for the roots of this 'culture of universalism' see Martin 2008: 26–33).

John Paul II composed his missionary encyclical letter, *Redemptoris missio*, in large part to answer these questions and doubts about the ongoing need for mission. The stated purpose of the letter is to renew the Church's missionary commitment, with the conviction that 'the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*' (*Redemptoris* 3; the term 'new evangelization,' which was first used by John Paul II in 1983, appears prominently in this letter (sixteen times), though the term 'mission' (205 times) takes precedence in general over 'evangelization' (fifty-seven times)). But it is clear from his own summary of the present situation that doubts surrounding mission are uppermost in John Paul's concerns:

> *Is missionary work among non-Christians still relevant?* Has it not been replaced by inter-religious dialogue? Is not human development an adequate goal of the Church's mission? Does not respect for conscience and for freedom exclude all ef-

> forts at conversion? Is it not possible to attain salvation in any religion? Why then should there be missionary activity?
>
> (*Redemptoris* 4; italics in original)

In a chapter entitled, 'Jesus Christ, the Only Saviour,' John Paul offers his principal response. Going back to the beginning, using the Scriptures to rehearse the plan of God in Christ, he locates the missionary nature of the Church first in the nature of the (p. 339) Trinitarian God, and then in the revelation of the Word made flesh (*Redemptoris* 4, 5). He insists that there remains one dispensation of salvation that comes from Christ through the Spirit: 'No one, therefore, can enter into communion with God except through Christ, by the working of the Holy Spirit. Christ's one, universal mediation, far from being an obstacle on the journey toward God, is the way established by God himself' (*Redemptoris* 5).

John Paul grants that there is a universal *offer* of salvation, and that 'we are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God' (*Redemptoris* 6), but he maintains that even when we recognize accessibility to salvation apart from formal membership in the Church, 'this grace comes from Christ; it is the result of his sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit' (*Redemptoris* 10). Summing up these truths in tension, he says: 'It is necessary to keep these two truths together, namely, the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all mankind and the necessity of the Church for salvation. Both these truths help us to understand the *one mystery of salvation*, so that we can come to know God's mercy and our own responsibility' (*Redemptoris* 9).

Why mission? asks John Paul. Because true liberation comes from opening ourselves to Christ; because a faith that is alive will make Christ known to others; and because men and women of every age are seeking for new life and 'have a right to know the value of this gift'. The impetus for mission comes not only from Christ's mandate, but also from the demands of God's life within us (*Redemptoris* 11). In the years following *Redemptoris missio*, many questions concerning the validity of mission continued to be raised, prompting a more sharply stated declaration from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2000, *Dominus Iesus*, which concludes with a vigorous call to renew the Church's mission: 'Thus, the certainty of the universal salvific will of God does not diminish, but rather increases the duty and urgency of the proclamation of salvation and of conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ' (22).

It is quite evident that developments since the Vatican Council have greatly enriched the Church's appreciation of other religions, of the place of interreligious dialogue, and of the need for a thoroughgoing cooperation with people of other religious faiths (and of none) in responding to the enormous human needs of the world. But official Catholic teaching on mission and evangelization, as found in the teaching of Paul VI, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI, has insisted that mission is not a thing of the past. As John Paul puts it, 'in the complex reality of mission, initial proclamation has a central and irreplaceable role' (*Redemptoris* 44).

Has this theology of mission and evangelization, refined and developed through the crucible of the post-conciliar period, found any purchase in the actual life of the Catholic Church? This question cannot receive an adequate treatment here, but some mention should be made of the rise of the new ecclesial communities and movements and the broader Catholic charismatic renewal since the Vatican Council. Already in *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul refers to the emergence of 'ecclesial movements' that are 'filled with missionary dynamism'. They 'represent a true gift of God both for new evangelization and for missionary activity properly so-called', and he recommends that 'they (p. 340) be spread, and that they be used to give fresh energy, especially among young people, to the Christian life and to evangelization, within a pluralistic view of the ways in which Christians can associate and express themselves' (*Redemptoris* 72).

At Pentecost in 1998 a worldwide representation of these movements and communities gathered in Rome. In his address to them John Paul stated that they 'represent one of the most significant fruits of that springtime in the Church which was foretold by the Second Vatican Council' (John Paul II, 1998, ch. 2). On the same occasion, Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) described the emergence of these movements and communities as evidence that the Holy Spirit himself 'had taken the floor', and he links these movements to missionary movements of the past, in particular with the rise of the early monastic movement, and sees in them the locus of the contemporary revitalization of the Church (Ratzinger 1998: 487). These movements, comprised primarily of laity, point to a season in which mission and evangelization are taking place—as they did in the early Church—from the joint effort of ordained and laymembers of the Church.

Characteristics of Catholic Mission and Evangelization Today

Thus far we have sought to trace the lines of a Catholic theology of mission and evangelization through history, especially in the twentieth century, so that the developments that have come through challenge and crisis may be seen in historical context. But it is also important and useful to consider the main characteristics of a Catholic theology of mission in a more analytic fashion, noting continuities with the past as well as developments and new departures. Towards this end, nine characteristics may be briefly identified (others could be added) that mark a Catholic theology of mission and evangelization at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

1. *The Essential Content and Universal Scope of Mission Remain Unchanged*. Perhaps the central continuity with a traditional understanding of mission is the conviction that the core message of the gospel remains unchanged. Vatican II acknowledged that circumstances and methods vary greatly, but that the mission of the gospel is 'one and the same everywhere and in every condition', and the essential nature of mission does not change (AG 6). In the same way, the universal destination of mission, that is, the conviction that mission must continue to all peoples that have not heard the gospel (mission *ad gentes*), has not abated, but rather been reproposed

with renewed vigour. Here we see a profound continuity with the traditional missionary teaching of the Church.

2. *Doctrine of the Trinity and Narrative of Salvation*. A theology of mission rooted in the Triune God and the missions of the Son and the Spirit in the world is a crucial development stemming from the Second Vatican Council. Developing this (p. 341) Trinitarian theology of mission from the entire narrative of Scripture and helping it to inform those actually engaged in missionary and evangelistic work remains an important task for the Catholic Church.

3. *Broadening the Scope of Mission*. The Church's understanding of mission has significantly broadened since Vatican II. Though the terms are used variously (e.g. mission, evangelization, evangelizing mission, proclamation), there are two primary senses of 'evangelization' or 'mission'. The narrower sense is the preaching of the gospel and establishment of the local Church in a given area, including catechesis and sacramental initiation. At the core of this is the act of proclamation. The broader sense encompasses the total mission of the Church and includes the full application of the social teaching of the Church and a concern for human development in the world. These two senses are set out in the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue's document *Dialogue and Proclamation* (ch. 8; Dulles 2008). Joining these together, a full understanding of mission would include: (1) the witness of Christian living so that people can see a way of life in action; (2) charitable action that reveals the love of God to people; (3) the proclamation of the gospel and the signs of the kingdom; (4) catechesis and sacramental initiation for full membership in the Church; (5) the application of the social teaching of the Church to promote the common good, to care for the poor, and to contribute to human development, peace, and justice—in short, to evangelize the wider culture. Francis Cardinal George writes: 'Culture is the object of our evangelization and not just the sea in which we swim. To form gospel-shaped people, the Church must work to create gospel-friendly cultures' (George 2008: 44). One important development is the distinction between the traditional mission *ad gentes* (to unevangelized peoples) and the New Evangelization or reevangelization in former Christian areas. The establishment of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization in 2010 underscores the focused effort for directing mission activity to formerly Christian lands.

4. *The Holy Spirit as the Principal Agent in Mission*. An important development since the council is the explicit recognition of the Holy Spirit as 'the principal agent of evangelization' (*Evangelii n.* 75). In a sense there is no new content here—this has always been true, but there is a new awareness of the sovereign action of the Spirit and the need to follow this lead in the entire work of mission. 'We Christians are called to an apostolic courage based upon trust in the Spirit. *He is the principal agent of mission!*' (*Redemptoris* 31; for the role of the Spirit in mission see Jacobs 1995: 38–47. For the impact of charismatic renewal on contemporary evangelization see Hocken 1995: 277–278).

5. *Proclamation as the Core of Mission*. Even as the definition of mission and evangelization has broadened, a Catholic theology of mission has given renewed attention to the place of proclamation as the core of evangelization. The full evangelization of cul-

ture 'will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed' (*Evangelii n.* 20). (p. 342) 'Proclamation is the permanent priority of mission. … In the complex reality of mission, initial proclamation has a central and irreplaceable role' (*Redemptoris* 44). 'Proclamation is the foundation, centre, and summit of evangelization' (*Dialogue and Proclamation* 10). Presupposed by this emphasis on proclamation is that the one proclaiming has had a personal encounter with Christ through the Spirit. The Church has recognized with greater clarity the need for missionaries themselves to encounter God personally, in order to be able to proclaim the gospel to others persuasively and effectively. Personal conversion is the prerequisite for proclamation.

6. *The Laity in Mission*. Recapturing a role for the laity that was more prevalent in the early Church, Vatican II underlined that mission and evangelization—both at home and abroad—must involve the full and direct role of the laity. 'No longer reserved to clerics and religious with a special missionary vocation, evangelization is now seen as the responsibility of the whole Church' (Dulles 2008: 6). The calling of the laity into the task of evangelization, thereby increasing their responsibility for owning and propagating the faith, is one of the most important new departures in the past century.

7. *The Poor and Human Development*. Charitable work and concern for the poor has always marked the mission of the Church. What is *new* in the Catholic Church's present approach to mission is a special *emphasis* on the poor and a commitment to work for justice and human dignity within the structures of human society. While 'it is not the Church's mission to work directly on the economic, technical, or political levels, or to contribute materially to development' (*Redemptoris* 58), the Church does have a direct mission to promote human dignity and justice through her social teaching and through the direct involvement of the laity in the temporal order.

8. *Inculturation*. Adaptation to the needs of particular cultures, likewise, has always been the missionary principle of the Church, however successful from age to age, and the Church can point to magnificent examples of cultural accommodation in her history (e.g. Bartolomé de las Casas, Matteo Ricci). The recently coined term, 'inculturation', captures both the impact of the gospel on a given culture and the impact of that culture on how the local Church takes shape. There is a two-way street here. Though there is no essential change in the gospel itself, through successful inculturation of the gospel there is a mutual effect on the culture as a whole and on the local Church as it grows to maturity within that culture. Arji A. Roest Crollius offers a useful working definition of inculturation:

> Inculturation is the integration of the Christian experience of a local Church into the culture of its people, in such a way that this experience not only expresses itself in elements of this culture, but also becomes a force that animates, orients and renews this culture, creating a new unity and communion, not only within the culture in question but also as an enrichment of the Church universal
> (Roest Crollius 1996: 53).

(p. 343) **9.** *Mission and Ecumenism*. A final characteristic of mission and evangelization to note is the new ecumenical climate within which mission occurs at the start of the twenty-first century. The Catholic Church was cautiously slow to engage the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century, but has now taken up a vigorous role in cooperation with other Christians at many levels, including common mission. 'We can already give a greater common witness to Christ before the world in the very work of evangelization. Christ's command urges us to do this; the duty of preaching and of giving witness to the Gospel requires this' (*Evangelii n.* 77). Though significant differences remain that place limits on common mission, many areas of fruitful mission are now in place. (For ways that Catholics are encouraged to join in common mission with other Christians, see *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* 1993: 50.) Notably, a full Catholic theology of mission must now take account of the goal of full Christian unity as part of the missionary aim: 'The fact that the Good News of reconciliation is preached by Christians who are divided among themselves weakens their witness. It is thus urgent to work for the unity of Christians, so that missionary activity can be more effective' (*Redemptoris* 50).

Suggested Reading

On the subject of this chapter see also *CCC* 849-856.

Bevans, Stephen B. and Schroeder, Roger P. (2004). *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books). Exhibiting extensive knowledge of mission history, ecumenical concerns and contemporary issues, this volume presents mission according to certain historical models and recommends elements of mission needed today.

Boguslawski, Steven and Martin, Ralph (eds) (2008). *The New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press). This volume presents the published results of a convocation on the New Evangelization in 2003 aimed at explaining what the New Evangelization is and how it can make progress in the life of the Church.

Bosch, David (1991). *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books). A contemporary classic for theology of mission, this volume by a Protestant author presents mission from a biblical and historical perspective, and offers elements of a postmodern missionary paradigm for today.

Dulles, Avery (2009). *Evangelization for the Third Millennium* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist). This volume gathers together ten articles from Cardinal Dulles on the topic of evangelization, touching on the wider history of Catholic mission but directed especially towards the theology and practice of Catholic evangelization from Vatican II until the opening of the third millennium.

Karotemprel, Sebastian (ed.) (1996). *Following Christ in Mission: A Foundational Course in Missiology* (Boston: Daughters of St Paul). This is a valuable coursebook on missiology written by acknowledged teachers in the field, aimed at an undergraduate Catholic audience.

(p. 344) Martin, Ralph and Williamson, Peter (eds) (2006). *John Paul II and the New Evangelization: How You Can Bring the Good News to Others* (Cincinnati: Servant). This is a more popular work, written in short articles on a wide variety of topics related to the New Evangelization.

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Prayer

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Abstract and Keywords

The universal call to holiness is not God's response to the Christian's own virtuous deeds and merits, but is God's own gracious design for humanity. This call envisages an integrated prayer life that includes public participation in the sacraments and private prayer. This essay focuses on silent contemplative prayer. The vastness of the soul is perfectly adapted to receiving the divine light and resting in God in silence. The soul receives from God the gift of desire for prayer. In the love for God that is stimulated by prayer the soul is drawn into the divine life, the mystery of the Triune God communicates Himself to the soul and transforms the soul in His image and likeness, granting the soul a foretaste of eternal life. The bulk of the essay explores the different dimensions of the life of prayer across a number of spiritual traditions.

Keywords: prayer, contemplation, soul, Trinity, silence, call, holiness

> "But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret"
>
> (Matt. 6:6)

Introduction: Light of the Nations, the Universal Call to Holiness

'THIS is the will of God, your sanctification' (1 Thess. 4:3). This single line from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians grounds and guides a crucial chapter of one of the most celebrated documents of Vatican II, *Lumen gentium* (*LG*), otherwise known as the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*. Chapter 5 of this document is entitled 'The Call to Holiness' and proclaims boldly that the Church herself is holy, 'because Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is hailed as all holy, loved the Church as his Bride, giving himself up for her so as to sanctify her… Therefore', the document continues, 'all in the Church, whether they belong to the hierarchy or are cared for by it are

called to holiness, according to the apostle's saying: For this is the will of God, your sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3)' (*LG* 39).

According to *Lumen gentium* the Church can be called holy only because God is holy, and 'God joined her to himself as his body' (*LG* 39). Hence, the Church is incorporated into the Trinitarian life of God. God

> sent the Holy Spirit to all to move them interiorly to love God with their whole heart… and to love one another as Christ loved them. The followers of Christ, called by God not in virtue of their works but by his design and grace, and justified in the Lord Jesus, have been made sons of God in the baptism of faith and partakers of the divine nature, and so are truly sanctified.
>
> (*LG* 40)

(p. 347) The Council document is clear that the universal call to holiness is not God's response to the Christian's own virtuous deeds and merits, but is already God's own gracious design for humanity. Indeed, the attraction to holiness that Christians experience is a response to God's initiative to draw all Christians into the life of the Trinity. While the Holy Spirit moves all Christians to an interior and intimate love of God in Christ, this communion with the Triune God at the same time contributes to the well-being of society. 'It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love, and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in earthly society' (*LG* 40). 'The forms and tasks of life are many but holiness is one' (*LG* 41).

The Church's teaching on the universal call to holiness envisages an integrated prayer life. Neither exclusively personal prayer nor exclusively acts of public worship, but the integration of each, the Christian 'must frequently partake of the sacraments, chiefly the Eucharist, and take part in the Liturgy; he must constantly apply himself to prayer, self-denial, active brotherly service and the practice of all the virtues' (*LG* 42). It is difficult to address with Catholic sensibilities the topic of prayer without also speaking of the sacraments, the liturgy, and love of neighbour. But because other essays within this volume treat the sacraments, Eucharist, liturgy, virtue, schools of spirituality, etc., the present essay will remain focused on the constant application to personal prayer (*LG* 42), always keeping in mind that, in the Roman Catholic view, personal prayer is inextricably linked to the wider life of the Church. Moreover, our focus on prayer in this chapter are on the contemplative simplification of prayer and some of the skills, disciplines, and guidance that the riches of the Roman Catholic tradition have to offer in this regard. We focus on silent, contemplative prayer rather than on devotional prayer, charismatic prayer, intercessory prayer, among others, for several reasons. First, all forms of prayer tend, in the fullness of time, to simplify into the silence of just being. Second, thanks to people such as John Main, Thomas Merton, and especially Thomas Keating, the Christian contemplative tradition has enjoyed a considerable renaissance in the last thirty years. Third, despite the rediscovery of this ancient tradition, familiarity with it remains limited to certain sectors of the Church, while other sectors remain either ignorant or suspicious of it as smacking of

an import from Eastern religions. Furthermore, because of the integrating dynamic intrinsic to contemplation, it is precisely from this perspective of contemplative rest in God that we see the unity of all forms of prayer, whether personal, liturgical, or sacramental.

Our focus on the art of contemplative prayer, with its emphasis on silent communion with God, is not to deny or subjugate the role of other forms of personal prayer. Rather our emphasis on the contemplative practice of silence in the presence of God is born of the insight that all forms of prayer find their fulfilment in simple, silent communion with God (Singh 1998). This point is well illustrated by the fourth-century monk (likely Syrian), Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who exerted considerable influence on the spiritual theologies of both Eastern and Western Churches. He writes, 'picture ourselves aboard a boat. There are ropes joining it to some rock. We take hold of the rope and pull (p. 348) on it as if we were trying to drag the rock to us when in fact we are hauling ourselves and our boat toward that rock' (*Divine Names* 3. 1; Ps-Dionysius 1987: 68). Pseudo-Dionysius provides a useful metaphor for how our petitions and intercessions end up uniting us to God. We think we know what we need and attempt to bend God to our will but the more we pull on the rope, the closer we are drawn into and united to God's will (Laird 2011: 133). Pseudo-Dionysius reminds us that 'We will not pull down to ourselves that power which is both everywhere and yet nowhere, but by divine reminders and invocations we may… be joined to it' (*Divine Names* 3. 1; Ps-Dionysius 1987: 69).

Light and Crystal: Anthropological Considerations

According to St Ambrose of Milan in the fourth century, part of God's creative intent in fashioning the human being was so that God Himself might have a place to rest. After the sixth day of creation and the world had been created, the great bishop of Milan says:

> Surely it is time now for us to make our contribution of silence, for now God rests from his work in making the world. He has found repose in the deep recesses of man, in man's mind and purpose. … God finds comfort in these traits, as his own testimony declares, 'In whom shall I find repose but in him who is humble and peaceful … '?
>
> (*Hexameron* 10. 75; Ambrose 1961: 282)

This statement offers a moving and sound orientation to the topic of personal prayer. By design of creation when we go into our inner room and pray to our Father in secret (Matt. 6:6), we simply rest in God's Sabbath rest in us. One wonders if St Augustine himself did not hear these words preached by his mentor St Ambrose, before he wrote one of his most celebrated lines in *Confessions*: 'You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you' (*Confessions*, I. 1; Augustine 2009: 3). By virtue of our creation, the human person is *capax Dei*, a capacity for God. The grace of creation itself es-

tablishes this intimate rapport of prayer between the human person and the Triune God, a rapport consummated in the death and resurrection of the Lord.

We are created in such a way as to receive God, created to be, as St Ambrose put it, a place for God 'to find repose'. The saints and sages of our tradition who have tasted this divine repose often speak of the structure and capacity of the soul in language of vastness and light. Among the most alluring and famous descriptions of the structure of the soul in which God rests comes from the sixteenth-century doctor of the Church, St Teresa of Avila. 'It came to me', she writes, 'that the soul is like a castle made exclusively of diamond or some other very clear crystal. In this castle there are a multitude of dwellings, just as in heaven there are many mansions' (*Interior Castle* I. 1; Teresa (p. 349) 2004: 35). St Teresa sees a correspondence between the vastness of the many mansions in heaven (John 14:2) and the vastness of the soul. 'I myself can come up with nothing as magnificent as the beauty and amplitude of the soul' (*Interior Castle* I. 1; Teresa 2004: 36). Commenting on how suited the soul is to receive divine light that indwells the soul, she says: 'The soul is innately as capable of sharing this divine light as a crystal is in reflecting the radiance of the sun' (*Interior Castle* I. 2; Teresa 2004: 41). The created properties of crystal are such that it both receives and reflects light. Hence, the soul, by virtue of its creation in the image and likeness of God, shares in this divine light. 'The fountainhead that shines like the sun from the centre of the soul never loses its radiance. It is ever-present within the soul and nothing can diminish its beauty' (*Interior Castle* I. 2; Teresa 2004: 42). For St Teresa sin simply obscures the light shining in the soul, as though a black cloth were draped over the crystal. Clearly St Teresa wants to emphasize the luminous vastness of the soul. 'This amplitude is impossible to exaggerate. The soul's capacity far transcends our imagining. The sun at the centre of this place radiates to every part' (*Interior Castle* I. 2; Teresa 2004: 45). For this reason, it is very important 'for any soul who practices prayer… to roam freely through all the dwellings' (*Interior Castle* I. 2; Teresa 2004: 45).

What leads us to roam freely through these dwellings? What draws us 'to put out into the deep and let down our nets for a catch' (Lk 5:4) but our desire to know the Triune God in the depths of our being. However, the very impulse to pray can very easily leave us with the impression that our longing to pray is something of our own doing. But the *desire* to pray is itself gift. As the anonymous fourteenth-century author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* put it: God 'kindled your desire and fastened to it a leash of longing' (*Cloud* 1; Spearing 2001: 20). Desire for God is itself an encounter with grace, an encounter that houses within it the homing instinct for the Triune God who indwells us. We think we seek God at our own behest and find him through our dedication, discipline, and virtue. But as St Augustine reminds us: 'You yourself give me the strength to seek, having caused yourself to be found and having given me the hope of finding you more and more. Before you lies my strength and my weakness; preserve the one, heal the other' (*The Trinity* 15. 51; Augustine 1991: 436). The desire itself to seek God who lets Himself be found, is itself sheer gift, given to all by virtue of our creation in God's image and likeness.

Prayer and the Life of the Trinity

In the opening lines of the prayer that concludes St Augustine's *The Trinity*, he writes: 'O Lord our God, we believe in you, Father and Son and Holy Spirit. Truth would not have said, "Go and baptize the nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28: 19)", unless you were triad' (*The Trinity* 15. 51; Augustine 1991: 436). Not only is Christian community and mission rooted in the mystery of the triune God, but also the life of prayer. For the indwelling Trinity is the ground, goal, and possibility of Christian prayer. The First Letter of John gives crucial insight into this: 'God is love. (p. 350) Whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.' (1 John 4:16). Love itself is essentially Trinitarian. St Augustine states rhetorically: 'but when I see charity, I do not see any trinity in it'. He answers: 'Oh but you do see a trinity if you do see charity. … For when we love charity, we love her loving something, precisely because she does love something' (*The Trinity* 8. 12; Augustine 1991: 253).

The word 'love' has a threefold implication; without this threefoldness we do not have that single mystery of love. Love implies a lover. Love implies a beloved, and love implies the love that unites lover and beloved. Without all three present we do not have the single reality of love. The Father is the sourceless source of love. His only begotten Son is the beloved, and the love that unites Father and Son is the Holy Spirit (Barron 1998: 149). John's Gospel is rich in this indwelling presence of Trinitarian love (even if spirit language is implicit). 'Jesus answered and said to him, "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling in him" ' (John 14: 23). 'May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me' (John 17: 20–23). 'I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them' (John 17: 26).

As Christians through the ages reflected on their experience of the indwelling presence of God, the role of the Holy Spirit became more explicit in the description of the spiritual transformation of the Christian at prayer. The sixteenth-century Carmelite and doctor of the Church, St John of the Cross speaks pointedly to this. Throughout his writings it is clear that not only does the Trinity indwell the soul, but the life of the Trinity communicates itself to the soul in prayer. In *The Spiritual Canticle* St John of the Cross writes:

> It should be known that the Word, the Son of God, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is hidden by his essence and his presence in the innermost being of the soul. Individuals who want to find him should… enter within themselves in deepest recollection… and… seek him in love, exclaiming: 'Where have you hidden?'
>
> (*The Spiritual Canticle* I. 6; John 1991: 480)

In *The Living Flame of Love*, St John of the Cross says:

> It should not be held as incredible that… the Blessed Trinity inhabits the soul by divinely illumining its intellect with the wisdom of the Son, delighting its will in the Holy Spirit, and absorbing it powerfully and mightily in the unfathomed embrace of the Father's sweetness
>
> (*The Living Flame of Love* I. 15; John 1991: 646).

But more than indwelling the soul, as attested to by Scripture and tradition, the mystery of the Triune God communicates Himself to the soul and thus transforms the soul in His image and likeness, granting the soul a foretaste of eternal life. 'Since this soul is so close to God that it is transformed into a flame of love in which the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit are communicated to it, how can it be thought incredible that it enjoy a foretaste (p. 351) of eternal life?' (*The Living Flame of Love* I. 6; John 1991: 643). In *The Spiritual Canticle* St John of the Cross speaks along the same lines:

> By this divine breath-like spiration, the Holy Spirit elevates the soul sublimely and informs her and makes her capable of breathing in God the same spiration of love that the Father breathes in the Son and the Son in the Father. This spiration is the Holy Spirit himself, who in the Father and the Son breathes out to her in this transformation in order to unite her to himself. There would not be true and total transformation of the soul were it not transformed in the three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity in an open and manifest degree.
>
> (*The Spiritual Canticle* 39. 3; John 1991: 622–623)

St John of the Cross proves an eloquent voice for the Catholic Christian doctrine that there is no transformation in the spiritual journey apart from the loving mystery of the Trinity who effects this transformation.

This transforming union of the soul in God does not compromise the soul's precious status as a creation of God but safeguards and completes it in the transforming, creative, Trinitarian love of God. This transformation is so penetrating that 'the soul loves God, not through itself but through him'. This is a remarkable quality, for the soul loves through the Holy Spirit, as the Father and the Son love each other, according to what the Son himself declares through St John: 'That the love with which you have loved me be in them and I in them (John 17: 26)' (*The Living Flame of Love* III. 82; John 1991: 707).

In order for the soul to be fully what it is created to be, the soul must find its completion in the Trinitarian love of Father, Son, and Spirit. When the soul is thus transformed in Trinitarian love, it sees the world from the perspective of this transforming love: 'It seems to [the soul] that the entire universe is a sea of love in which it is engulfed, for conscious of the living point or center of love within itself, it is unable to catch sight of the boundaries of this love' (*The Living Flame of Love* 2. 10; John 1991: 661).

Any theology of personal prayer must acknowledge the broader ecclesial call to holiness of all Christians to seek union with the Triune God who Himself seeks out humanity as a place to find repose in the deep places of the human spirit. Moreover, any theology of per-

sonal prayer likewise requires a practice of personal prayer, a way to return to the heart indwelled by the Trinity.

‘Return to Our Hearts and Find Him There’

Commenting on the significance of the Christ’s ascension, St Augustine writes in *Confessions*: ‘[Christ] has withdrawn from our sight so that we might return to our hearts and find him there’ (*Confessions* 4. 12; Augustine 2009: 24). This return to the heart is a frequent theme in the spiritual theology of the Bishop of Hippo, for this is (p. 352) where we encounter Christ teaching in the silence of the heart. In *Sermon* 102, he preaches: ‘Go back, therefore, to the heart (Isa. 46:8), and if you are believers, you will find Christ there; he himself is speaking to you there. Yes, here am I, shouting my head off; but he, in silence, is doing more teaching’ (*Sermon* 102. 2; Augustine 2009: 74). With an even greater sense of urgency Augustine says: ‘Why do you want to speak and not want to listen? You are always rushing out of doors but are unwilling to return into your own house. Your teacher is within… It is inside that we listen to the truth’ (*Expositions on the Psalms* 139. 12; Augustine 2004: 297). For St Augustine, as for many of the saints and sages of our tradition, Christ speaks in the silence of the heart. But when we attempt to listen in silence we encounter our own inner noise, as St Augustine knew to his own embarrassment: ‘If only I spoke when preaching your word and praising you!… Deliver me, my God from the much speaking which I suffer from inwardly in my soul… My thoughts are not silent even when my voice is (*The Trinity* 15. 51; Augustine 1991: 436).

The noise in our heads is really the great difficulty for the Christian at prayer. The simpler prayer becomes—just resting in God’s rest in us—the more the struggle with thoughts becomes a trial that trains us to release and rest ever more deeply in the Triune God, who has made His home in us. The tradition, however, offers many remedies to help train us to discover the silence within and listen to the One who teaches there in silence.

Resting in God’s Repose

Resting in God—or the practice of contemplation—is one of the great spiritual arts. It is not a technique but a skill that is cultivated over many seasons. The skills required are not those of acquisition but those of release. St Teresa of Avila likens this release to peeling fruit: ‘Imagine a palmetto fruit. Layer upon layer must be peeled away to reach the tasty part in the middle. So it is with the interior castle’ (*Interior Castle* I. 2; Teresa 2004: 45). In the Christian West there are several disciplines one can practise to quieten the mind and dispose oneself to the transforming mystery of Love. For our purposes we focus on two: *lectio divina* and the practice of contemplation, today popularly called ‘centring prayer’ or ‘Christian meditation’. While each is widely practised today, both *lectio divina* and the practice of contemplation have roots that reach deeply into the Christian tradition.

Lectio Divina: Resting in the Silence of Scripture

St Ambrose of Milan spoke of God finding ‘repose in the deep places of man, in man’s mind and purpose’ (*Hexameron* 10. 75; Ambrose 1961: 282). The practice of *lectio* *(p. 353)* *divina* is a way of reading, meditating on, praying with, and contemplating Scripture in such a way that we discover in and through the text of Scripture God’s own repose in our deep places. Through patient reading of Scripture we gradually come to rest in the God who rests in us and reveals Himself intimately to us in the Scriptures. Though an ancient way of praying with Scripture, *lectio divina* is still widely practised today by monastics and non-monastics alike (William Shannon 1988). *Lectio divina* is often translated as ‘sacred reading’, but its practitioners nearly always use the Latin phrase.

To engage the Scriptures in this practice of personal prayer presumes that the text of Scripture is more than simply words on a page, but like a piece of fruit, the text has an outer skin, as well as inner pulp, juice, and stone. The practice of *lectio divina* entails a fourfold progression in engaging Scripture: *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (prayer), *contemplatio* (contemplation). We begin by reading a passage until something bids us stop and ponder its deeper meaning. Here we may ponder this meaning, perhaps for quite some time (*meditatio*) until we are caught up in prayer (*oratio*). The twelfth-century Carthusian Guigo II gives a classic expression of the movement from meditation to prayer: ‘you [, Lord,] have shown yourself to me in that breaking of the bread, and the more I see you, the more I long to see you, no more from without, in the rind of the letter, but within, in the letter’s hidden meaning’ (*The Ladder of Monks* 6; Guigo 1981: 73). Reading the letter of the text (the rind) draws us deeper into the meaning of the text, deeper than the mind’s active seeking for hidden truth buried in the text (meditation), to burning desire to taste the sweetness of this truth. Finally we come to rest in this truth in contemplation, ‘when the mind is in some sort lifted up to God and held above itself, so that it now tastes the joys of everlasting sweetness’ (*The Ladder of Monks* 2; Guigo 1981: 68). Guigo II summarizes beautifully this fourfold progression of *lectio divina*:

> Reading, as it were puts food whole into the mouth, meditation chews it and breaks it up, prayer extracts its flavour, contemplation is the sweetness itself which gladdens and refreshes. Reading works on the outside, meditation on the pith: prayer asks for what we long for, contemplation gives us delight in the sweetness which we have found.
>
> (*Ladder of Monks* 3; Guigo 1981: 69)

The Practice of Contemplation

For a first orientation to the practice of contemplation, *The Cloud of Unknowing* can be considered something of a *locus classicus*. Written in the fourteenth century by an anony-

mous English monk (likely a Carthusian), in the East Midlands dialect of Middle English, the book gives quite specific instructions on how to deal with a wide variety of issues ranging from distractions in prayer to proud prelates.

(p. 354) The essence of his instruction on what he calls 'this work of contemplation' can be found in Chapter 7. He advocates maintaining a simple 'naked intention directed to God… without any other goal than himself' (*Cloud* 7; Spearing 2001: 29). The author of *The Cloud* acknowledges, however, that this is easier said than done; for while our *intention* may be to focus on God our *attention* wanders and roams all over the place. He therefore advises the use of a prayer word on which to focus:

> If you want to have the intention wrapped and enfolded in one word, so that you can hold on to it better, take only a short word of one syllable; that is better than one or two syllables, for the shorter it is, the better it agrees with the work of the spirit. A word of this kind is the word 'God' or 'love'.
>
> (*Cloud* 7; Spearing 2001: 29)

It should be observed that the author's insistence that the prayer word be monosyllabic such as 'God' or 'love' doesn't work for French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, or Greek. Obviously he writes for an English-speaking audience only. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us of a much older (at least fifth-century) prayer phrase, known as the Jesus Prayer (now widely practised in the West): 'The Eastern prayer of the heart, the Jesus Prayer, says: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner" ' (*CCC* 435). It is likey that the author of *The Cloud* did not know of the Jesus prayer tradition, which was in wide use among the Eastern Churches during the *Cloud* author's lifetime. In fact, today people make use of a wide variety of prayer words or phrases, often inspired by Scripture (Laird 2006: 49–52). Whatever the case, the author of the *Cloud*'s teaching is valuable: 'fasten this word to your heart, so that it never parts from it, whatever happens. This word will be your shield and your spear, whether you ride in peace or in war' (*Cloud* 7; Spearing 2001: 29). He means something quite practical. As we sit in prayer, the mind wonders and roves. Therefore, give the mind something to attend to; let it gently repeat this prayer word come what may, a tempest of distractions or calm abiding. Distractions will be frequent as we try to rest in silence. As our practice of contemplation expands and develops, however, so will our way of handling these distractions change and develop. The *Cloud* author's consistent advice is simply to let go of these distractions by returning our attention to the prayer word, placing all distractions 'beneath the cloud of forgetting' (*Cloud* 7; Spearing 2001: 29).

In Chapter 32 of *The Cloud*, the author has a yet subtler teaching regarding more vexing and stubborn distractions. When distractions refuse to leave he has deceptively simple counsel. He says 'try to look over their shoulders, as it were, searching for something else —and that something is God, enclosed in a cloud of unknowing' (*Cloud* 32; Spearing 2001: 55). The author does not actually think that distractions have shoulders. He has in mind something far subtler that requires a more mature practice of contemplation. In order to look over the shoulders of distraction, we have to allow the distraction to be there. The

way to do this is to meet the distraction with stillness, not commentary (Laird 2006: 75–93). One has to grow interiorly still in order to notice that distractions have shoulders, as it were. Moreover, to look over their metaphorical shoulders and not (p. 355) get caught up in the inner narrative about the distractions implies (this is his real point) a greater depth of interior silence. This gives us a greater sense of inner spaciousness in such a way that we can look through or over the distractions 'into something else—and that something else is God enclosed in a cloud of unknowing' (*Cloud* 32; Spearing 2001: 55). The result of this ingenious piece of advice is that, given the maturity of our practice of contemplation, these distractions come to serve as pointers beyond themselves. As Meister Eckhart observed: 'What was previously an obstacle to you is now a great help' (*Sermon* 24; Eckhart 1994: 228). But the practice of contemplation, as the author of *The Cloud* sees it, does not just deepen our interior life with God. It also helps us grow in virtue.

When we discover the deepest centre of our being we are paradoxically in deepest solidarity with all humanity, whether we know our neighbour well or not. 'A perfect worker in contemplation has no regard to any person for his own sake, whether kin or stranger, friend or foe; for all seem kin to him, and none seems a stranger' (*Cloud* 24; Spearing 2001: 49). Even though someone may torment this 'worker in contemplation', these 'he feels moved to desire as much good for them as he would for the closest friend he has' (*Cloud* 24; Spearing 2001: 49). The practice of contemplation offers a remedy to the Christian maxim of love thy enemy (Matt. 5:44). Indeed, the practice of contemplation helps us grow in charity:

> But I say that by means of this work [of contemplation] he will be made so virtuous and so charitable that afterwards, when he descends to converse with or pray for his fellow Christians, his will shall be as specifically directed to his foe as to his friend, to a stranger as to his kin—yes, and sometimes more to his foe than to his friend.
>
> (*Cloud* 25; Spearing 2001: 50)

St Teresa of Avila is likewise aware of how deep prayer turns us towards our neighbour. Indeed, she is highly critical of those who try so hard to control 'what state of prayer they are in that they become peevish about it' (*Interior Castle* 5. 3; Teresa 2004: 142). According to her this is a clear sign that such people do not understand 'the path to union. They think the whole thing is about rapture' (*Interior Castle* 5. 3; Teresa 2004: 142). She exhorts with her customary authority:

> But no, friends, no! What the Beloved wants from us is action. What he wants is that if one of your friends is sick, you take care of her. Don't worry about interrupting your devotional practice. Have compassion. If she is in pain, you feel it, too. … This is true union with [God's] will. … Believe me, if you are not loving your neighbour you have not attained union.
>
> (*Interior Castle* 5. 3; Teresa 2004: 142–143)

While prayer, deep prayer, is certainly personal, it is not private. As prayer transforms our sense of who we are in light of the mystery of the Triune God, prayer likewise changes our manner of dealing with others, friend and foe alike.

(p. 356) Conclusion: Union with God is the Answer to Jesus' Prayer

Our desire and capacity for union with God is, by the grace of creation, built into us. Its fulfilment is at the same time the answer of Jesus' prayer to the Father: 'That they may all be one, as you, Father are in me and I in you and that they may be one in us' (John 17: 21). Prayer's journey to the centre of the heart leads to the discovery of that love with which God 'first loved us' (1 John 4: 10). So observes John Cassian, the monastic founder and legislator in fifth-century Gaul, who exerted a decisive influence on Western Christian spirituality:

> [God] will be all that we think about, all our living, all that we talk about, our very breath. And that the union of Father and Son, of Son and Father, will fill our senses and our minds. As God loves us with a love that is true and pure, a love that never breaks, we too will be joined to Him in a never-ending unshakeable love, and it will be such a union that our breathing and our thinking and our talking will be 'God'. And we will come at last to that objective which I have mentioned, the goal which the Lord prayed to be fulfilled in us: 'That they may all be one as we are one, as I am in them and you in me so that they are utterly one'.
>
> (John 17:22–23; *Conferences* 10. 7; Cassian (1998): 129–130)

While the heart burns for this union, the fire of desire has been kindled by God. The consummation of this desire is not the result of our effort, though surely we cooperate, but the answer of Jesus' prayer that we be drawn ever deeper into the life of the Trinity, his life with the Father in the Spirit.

The personal call to holiness of all Christians is set in the context of the entire Church's participation in the life of the Trinity (*LG* 39). Hence, prayer is not only Trinitarian but also deeply ecclesial: as personal as the journey of prayer is, it is not a private journey; for the deeper we journey to our centre—and 'the soul's centre is God'—as St John of the Cross reminds us (*The Living Flame of Love* 1. 12; John 1991: 583), the more we are in communion with all believers. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite explains this seeming paradox: 'It is rather like the case of a circle. The centre point of the circle is shared by the surrounding radii' (*Divine Names* 2. 5; Ps-Dionysius 1987: 62). Only on the rim of the wheel of daily life do we appear to be separate from one another. Following each spoke from the rim to the hub, all the spokes are one in the centre (Laird 2011: 133). This is the personal and ecclesial journey of the prayer life of all Christians who seek the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. At the centre of this sphere is the Sabbath rest, which, according to St Ambrose, God sought out in the deep places of humanity. Prayer from this

centre is Sabbath rest in the Triune mystery who rests in us. It is silence that expresses itself as praise, petition, intercession, and the communion of all believers. As St Augustine puts it, ‘there, [in the Sabbath rest of heaven] we shall be still and see, we shall see and we shall love, we shall love and we shall praise’ (*City of God* 22. 30; Augustine 1973: 1091).

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Catholic Moral Anthropology

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter concerns Catholic moral anthropology. After beginning by emphasizing the centrality of the teaching that human beings are created in the image of God, the chapter shows that human beings, as a union of soul and body, are ordered towards beatitude, towards a true freedom that imitates and participates in divine freedom. The status of being in the image of God is a gift to all persons: even the most seriously intellectually disabled persons still bear this image in its fullness. The architecture of the moral life is then considered, by examining the passions and importance of an educated conscience. The chapter ends by showing that Catholic moral anthropology emphasizes the communal nature of the moral life.

Keywords: anthropology, happiness, freedom, beatitude, passions, morality

Introduction

IN this chapter, I begin with a consideration of the human being, created in the image of God, and relate the various dimensions of the moral life to this foundation. The human being is designed for union with God, and the moral life is one way in which human beings anticipate this union. The chapter unfolds in three parts. The first part considers the heart of theological anthropology: Christian teaching on human beings as created in the image of God. In addition to the more prominent features I will highlight the importance of happiness in our understanding of what it means to be in God's image. This first theme occupies more than half the chapter, and rightly so. Catholic moral anthropology is built on the foundation of a robust account of what it means to be human. The second part of the chapter considers the Beatitudes, which the *Catechism* particularly honours, and the third examines the moral character of human acts. At a number of points during the first half of the chapter, I will be in conversation with two key figures: St Gregory of Nyssa and St Thomas Aquinas. These two interlocutors will help to show continuity across the foundational patristic and medieval periods of Catholic thought, and give some sense of the range of discussion that has obtained within that continuity.

Being Human

The idea that human beings are created in the image of God forms the basis for Catholic accounts of the human being. The essential features of the *imago Dei*—beatitude, rationality, and freedom—are essential to the moral life of human beings. When we experience true beatitude, and make good choices by the rational exercise of our free will, we show forth (p. 362) the likeness of God most clearly. Evidence of these traits is not required as 'proof', however: every person is created in God's image, which cannot be lost (*ST* I, q. 62, a. 5), and every human being is owed respect accordingly, whether or not the operation of rationality or free will is evident.

The Image of God and the Rational Soul

The doctrine of the *imago Dei* is not properly understood without some account of the soul: the *Catechism* identifies the soul as 'that by which [one] is most especially in God's image' (*CCC* 363). Before talking any further about the soul, we should dispense with the notion that talking about the soul introduces a body-denigrating dualism. The human being, 'though made of body and soul, is a unity' (*CCC* 363, *GS* 14). Because this is so, the body must be regarded 'as good and [held] in honour since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day' (*CCC* 364, *GS* 14). Thus, while Catholic theological anthropology affirms the distinction between body and soul, this distinction does not undermine the union of the person or the goodness of the body. We should note also that the power of the soul to animate the body is 'made complete only by the power of God's Spirit' (Scheeben 1947: 677). Like the mystery of the union of divine and human in the person of Christ, the union of body and soul in the human being defies explanation.

Writing about the Eucharistic community, Herbert McCabe observed:

> in recent centuries the physical bodily aspect of our beliefs has been heavily played down. Partly because of some philosophical mistakes, we have got into the habit of thinking of the real person as an invisible immaterial being. Bodily actions are thought to be at best merely manifestations of the real human acts which take place invisibly
>
> (McCabe 2010: 57).

Soul language certainly allows us to talk about features of human beings that tend to be associated with the immaterial aspect of our humanity, but the soul is no more the 'real' person than the body would be the 'real' person without the soul. The negative soul–body dualism, which McCabe criticizes, tends to view the body as impeding the soul. Catholic theology, on the other hand, views the body as sharing in the dignity of the image of God, and regards the body as essential to the spiritual life. By baptism, we are—soul and body—'incorporated into Christ … and participate in the life of the risen Lord' (*CCC* 1694).

Gregory of Nyssa (*c*.335–*c*.395) highlights the natural inclination to God intrinsic to the (prelapsarian) soul. Although Gregory insists that we cannot know the soul's essence any more than we know God's essence, he allows his sister Macrina to offer a working definition in *On the Soul and the Resurrection.* That definition makes use of some Platonist themes that had long been incorporated into Christian tradition: 'the soul is a substance which is begotten, alive, intelligible, and, by itself, it puts into an (p. 363) organic perceptive body a life-giving power as long as the nature capable of receiving these things endures' (Gregory of Nyssa 1967: 205). The soul equips the person to perceive 'the vision of God', which 'is the goal of human existence' by giving her the capacity to receive grace and to participate in the divine life (Harrison 2010: 51). Human beings reflect God's image through this grace-filled participation. Being in the image of God is an activity of the soul, and the image may be described also as a mirror. In *On Virginity* Gregory of Nyssa explains that we reflect the divine image like a shiny surface reflects a beam of light. That does not imply a passive process, however, the pure, Spirit-filled soul:

> becomes light-like, and it is mixed with the true and lofty purity, and it glows and is filled with rays and becomes light in accordance with the promise of the Lord who declared that the just will shine like the sun. We see this happen also on earth in the case of a mirror of water or anything that has the power of reflection because of its smoothness. For, when these receive the beam of the sun, they create another beam from themselves …'
>
> (*virg*. 11; Gregory of Nyssa 1967: 41).

Powered by the engine of desire, the soul's activity of receiving the light and reflecting it displays the image of God. In order to reflect clearly, however, the soul-as-mirror must be clean and properly directed. The groundwork of the moral life is to prime the soul, by directing desire and regulating rationality, for the reception and reflection of the divine light.

Before sin disrupted the connection between the source of the beam and the receptive/reflective surface, the will's original freedom would have directed the soul towards the source of its delight: God. In fallen humanity, reason and desire no longer work together: the soul no longer recognizes God as the source of life and the true object of desire, and the image of God becomes marred as the soul's glassy surface is obscured. The peace that ought to reign in the human soul gives way as sin misdirects desire and misinforms reason. We are inscrutable to ourselves, not only because of sin; we cannot understand the essence of the soul any more than we can that of God. Only Christ reflects the perfect harmony between the human being and the divine life, showing to us the unalloyed 'image of the invisible God', and thus is our model towards restoration (Gregory of Nyssa 1967: 83–89).

St Thomas Aquinas's teaching on the soul draws from Gregory's sources as well as many thinkers outside Gregory's field of vision. In the *Summa* Thomas calls soul 'the root principle of life' (*ST* Ia, q. 75, a. 1, *r.*), making use of Aristotelian language. On his reading, every living thing is 'ensouled'. That is simply what it means to be animate. Soul gives to

inanimate matter form and the capacity for action. Human beings are distinguished from other animate, corporeal creatures by having a *rational* soul: 'a rational soul is the essential form of a human being' (*Questions on the Soul*, q. 1, sc. 2). The soul gives to the otherwise inert elements of a human being, life, action, and rationality. The soul is also incorporeal and sentient (*ST* I, q. 75, a. 2)—and is somehow separated from the body between death and the final resurrection—but body and soul also form a unity (p. 364) (*ST* I, q. 76, a. 1). Indeed, this unity is such that although the soul imparts to the body the act of existence, it cannot exist without the body (except under very particular conditions, see *SCG* II. 68). In this Thomas is using both Aristotelian and Platonist language for Christian ends.

In Thomas's account, the place of rationality in the soul's reflection of God's image comes into sharp focus. Quoting St Augustine, Thomas writes: 'Man's excellence consists in the fact that God made him to His own image by giving him an intellectual soul, which raises him above the beasts of the field' (*ST* I, q. 93, a. 2, *r.*). We should mark two things in this sentence: first, Thomas reiterates the connection between the soul and the image of God; second, he emphasizes that it is the *intellectual soul* that reflects the image of God.

Thomas says that 'we see that the image of God is in [human beings] in three ways': (1) human beings have 'a natural aptitude for understanding and loving God; and this aptitude consists in the very nature of the mind, which is common to all men'; (2) a human being 'actually and habitually knows and loves God, though imperfectly; and this image consists in the conformity of grace'; and (3) the blessed human being 'knows and loves God perfectly' (*ST* I, q. 93, a. 4, *r.*). Human beings *all* have a soul that, by its nature, has the capacity for knowledge and love of God. In order to grasp the connection between the image of God and the knowledge of God, we must look more closely at what Thomas says about knowledge of God. 'Knowledge of God in his essence', he writes, 'is a gift of grace and belongs only to the good, yet the knowledge we have by natural reason belongs to both good and bad' (*ST* I, q. 12, a. 12, ad. 3).

The blessed attain the vision of God by knowledge *and by love* (Sherwin 2013). Not all who see God perceive God's essence to the same degree; Thomas explains that this 'is because one mind has a greater power or ability to see God than has the other'. This 'greater power' does not, however, come from having a more finely tuned natural reason. 'This ability to see God does not belong to the mind by its own nature but by the light of glory which renders the mind in some sense like to God'. The greater share in the 'light of glory' comes to those who have 'a greater desire', which 'predisposes a man and fits him to receive what he desires. So that he who has greater charity will see God more perfectly, and will be more blessed' (*ST* I, q. 12, a. 6 *r*). Thomas goes on to explain that the 'diversity of intellectual capability' that yields differing degrees of vision is 'not inborn' but 'given by the light of glory' (*ST* I, q. 12, a. 6, ad. 3). For Thomas, the intellectual soul is perfected by a divinely infused knowledge given disproportionately to those who love more (cf Luke 7:41–48), not to those who are cleverer (Marshall 2005).

We have already seen that Thomas regards the intellectual soul as indispensable for every human body. The implication is that where there is a living human body, there is an intellectual soul, whether or not the activity of intellection is evident. We can go further. As we have seen, Thomas understands the activity of intellection as an activity of the soul (*ST* I, q. 3, a. 1, ad. 2; q. 93, a. 2, c; q. 93, a. 6, c). Thus, however well or badly the brain is functioning, whether or not the body shows it, the soul will be fit for knowledge of God (*ST* I, q. 12, a. 11, *r.*). Even the inability to express oneself in language does not impair one's ability to be in communion with God. (Consider that babies are perfectly (p. 365) fit for the beatific vision: baptized infants go to heaven and enjoy the vision of God—linguistic competence is not necessary.)

Happiness

The *Catechism* states that being in the image of God is part of what it is for the human being to be 'ordered to beatitude' (*CCC* 1762). Participation in divine life is participation in divine blessedness, as the Scripture hints: the good and faithful servant is invited to 'enter into the *joy* of [his] master' (Matt. 25:23). 'God calls us to his own beatitude' (*CCC* 1718; see also 1719–1723). In addition to the passage from Matthew's gospel cited here, and leaving aside the Beatitudes for the moment, writers in both Old and New Testaments attest to the centrality of joy in the life of the people of God. In Deuteronomy, for example, the people are indicted for failing to 'serve the Lord [their] God with joyfulness and gladness of heart' (Deut. 28:47); conversely, a mark of true feast-keeping is joy. So the people 'kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy, for the Lord had made them joyful' (Ezra 6:22). Joyfulness in the Lord characterizes the redeemed (Isa. 29:19; 35:10), and is the appropriate response to God's mercy (Ps. 51:12). In the New Testament, joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22), given even in the midst of affliction to those who receive the gospel (1 Thess. 1:6). To speak of the joy of the Lord may seem unduly pious. Yet it is just as surely a gift of the Holy Spirit as the perhaps more obvious virtues of patience, faithfulness, and self-control.

This theme is to be found in both Gregory of Nyssa and Thomas. In his homily on the sixth Beatitude, Gregory links the happiness for which we are destined with our creation in the image of God. The clear, reflective surface of the water described in the previous section appears, obliquely, in the Homily. 'Just as happens in the case of iron', Gregory explains:

> when it is stripped of rust by a whetstone, and what once was dull gleams of its own accord as it faces the sun and gives off beams and shafts of light, so also the inner man … once it has wiped off the rusty filth … will once again recover its likeness to its archetype and be good
>
> (*Hom beat.* 6.4; Gregory of Nyssa 2000: 70).

The person who has cleaned the inner mirror will find within the brilliant reflection of God. This is the beatitude of the pure in heart this side of heaven: seeing God reflected clearly in themselves.

Thomas teaches that ‘only God is immediately happy because of his essence, and not due to a prior movement or activity’ (Wieland 2002: 66). So it is not surprising to find that the image of God finds ‘happiness in God alone’ (*ST* I–II, q. 2, a 8). Thomas cites ‘joy as one of the signs of virtuous action’ (Wieland 2002: 131–132), and implies the indispensability of happiness for the moral life: ‘The will tends to that final act of mind which is happiness, and accordingly it has to be rightly bent if that happiness is to be (p. 366) reached—so also an arrow has to be accurately flighted to hit the target’ (*ST* I–II, q. 4, 4). As Thomas says: ‘happiness … is man’s last end’ (*ST* I–II, q. 2 a. 5, *r*). Those who achieve the vision of God delight in God.

For both Gregory and Thomas, the cold rationality of a post-Enlightenment subject would hardly reflect the image of God. Divine beatitude is reflected in God’s image as certainly as God’s *logos*, and it is an aspect of the divine life that can be seen even in those whose capacities for language and abstraction remain undeveloped.

Freedom as Expression of God’s Image

We are now in a better position to consider the meaning of freedom as ‘an outstanding manifestation of the divine image’ (*CCC* 1705). Indeed, freedom is the essential characteristic of being in the image of God in Catholic theological anthropology: ‘Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognized as a free and responsible being’ (*CCC* 1738). Like Christian beatitude, Christian freedom reflects God’s own freedom. Yet it is clear from the foregoing that freedom, on the Catholic reading, cannot be the freedom from any constraint whatsoever. The freedom essential to being human is the freedom to pursue true happiness, which is found only in God.

Often, however, ‘freedom’ is taken to indicate ‘liberty to pursue one’s desires indiscriminately’. Yet, we human creatures exercise our freedom authentically not when we *feel* free to do whatever we like, but when we are free from compulsions that would lead us away from God. God’s promise to ‘cause [Israel] to walk in [God’s] statutes’ (Ezekiel 36:26) is not a promise to thwart the people’s will and desires, but a promise to *heal* them. One perfect act, which demonstrates the unity of freedom and responsibility in the redeemed, is Mary’s fiat: ‘Let it be done to me according to your word’ (Luke 1:38). Mary’s response to the angel Gabriel exemplifies the right use of freedom, which takes on the responsibility of acting in response to—and in accordance with—God’s own word. True freedom is thus freedom *for* happiness, not freedom from whatever would hinder us from doing whatever we want, anytime, without reference to anything or anyone else (see Pinckaers 1995: 327-378).

It is also essential to understand that in Catholic tradition our freedom and God’s freedom do not compete. The more a human being cooperates with the Holy Spirit, the *more* free she is. As the *Catechism* has it: ‘The grace of Christ is not in the slightest way a rival of our freedom when this freedom accords with the sense of the true and good that God has put in the human heart’ (*CCC* 1742). The statement, ‘for freedom Christ has set us free’ is followed by an injunction not to be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

This leads me to a consideration of the relationship between rationality, beatitude, and freedom in the redeemed. It is not simply the case that reason trumps desire, for two reasons. First, our desire for happiness, as Gregory and Thomas both insist, is part (p. 367) of what it means to be human. A failure to seek our happiness would diminish our humanity. Reason's role is therefore not to snuff out desire, but to direct it towards its true object: God. This brings us to the second point: the intellect is also liable to corruption. Sin-blinded reason cannot do what it ought to do for desire—direct it to that which alone satisfies. Reason's job is to assess our desires. 'When we succeed in bringing our desires into line with our evaluation', as Robert Spaemann writes, 'we feel free; when we do not, we experience impotence, like addicts and compulsive offenders' (Spaemann 2017: 13). The proper alignment of reason and desire produces peace in the soul. Freedom does not, therefore, name an unfettered state of consciousness, but the right relationship between reason and desire, unbroken by sin's intrusion.

Beatitude and the Beatitudes

At this point, we are ready to examine the connection between the image of God and the moral life. As we have seen, Scripture connects joy with salvation and the presence of God. In a fallen world, the prescription for happiness proffered by our human societies does not correspond with the beatitude for which God has made us. The Beatitudes draw the contrast starkly.

> Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
>
> Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
>
> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
>
> Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
>
> Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
>
> Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.
>
> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
>
> Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
>
> for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
>
> Blessed are you, when they insult you and persecute you
>
> and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me
>
> (Matt. 5:3–11).

John Chrysostom regarded the Beatitudes as the 'foundations of [Christ's] new polity', not only spoken for the original hearers of his words, but 'written for the sake of all men afterwards' (Homily 15 on Matthew). The *Catechism* echoes this appraisal:

> The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life; they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ's disciples; they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints
>
> (*CCC* 1717).

(p. 368) The states in which the disciples are called 'blessed' are not states in which we would normally consider ourselves happy. Yet the *Catechism* resolves the cognitive disconnect here: the Beatitudes direct us to a different way of reading our experience. Even the most abject state—mourning or being persecuted, perhaps—becomes a place of expectation for those who interpret their circumstances in the light of these words of Jesus. In this way, the Beatitudes reveal the culture of divine happiness, and help us to see the way in which Christians reflect it.

Christians pursue happiness not by seeking our own comfort or pleasure, but by following Jesus. The Beatitudes give us a thick description of true and lasting human happiness: to be comforted; to be satisfied; to see God; to be rewarded in heaven; to obtain mercy, and so on (see also Mattison 2017). Thus the apparently unhappy situation of the meek or the mourning does not last: the kingdom of heaven belongs to these. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness already begin to look like Jesus, as do the merciful and the peacemakers. To be persecuted for the sake of righteousness is to suffer with Christ and so follow him into his glory. The path of happiness leads through suffering, but it is not a path we tread alone. We will return to the communal context of our discipleship at the end of this chapter.

Acting Humanly

We have seen that the question with regards to our creation in God's image is not whether this or that person 'really is' in God's image. Now we turn to the question of how we human creatures ought to live in order to display that image most clearly. The *Catechism* links true freedom, the Beatitudes, and the moral life: 'The human person is ordered to beatitude by his deliberate acts' (*CCC* 1762).

In Catholic moral theology *deliberate* human acts are subject to moral evaluation. Three aspects of the act come under scrutiny: 'the goodness of its object, of its end, and of its circumstances together' (*CCC* 1760). Acts 'freely chosen in consequence of a judgement of conscience' bring God's image to light in us. Here we find the clearest affirmation of

the active nature of being in the image of God. We *do* the *imago Dei*, it is not simply a feature of our being, like the shape of our skull or the redness of our blood. It might perhaps be better imagined as a talent, like an aptitude for music, that flourishes when we cultivate it. Without instruction and practice, a gifted child will not achieve mastery. Our innate capacity for being in God's likeness needs education and nourishment in order to grow into a bright reflection of the divine.

Intention plays a crucial role, yet it needs to be clarified. Like freedom, 'intention' has a significance particular to moral theology. According to the *Catechism*, a bad intention corrupts an apparently good act (*CCC* 1753). Even so, it is preferable to do the good act, despite the wrong intention: the performance of a virtuous act without virtue can be a step towards developing virtue (see for example, *CCC* 1753 with respect to almsgiving). On the other hand, though, a good intention does not baptize a morally wrong act (p. 369) (for example lying, stealing, calumny). Saying something that one knows to be untrue cannot be justified by an altruistic motive. Intention is not sufficient, but it is essential (*CCC* 1756).

The Passions

The *Catechism* defines passions as 'emotions or movements of the sensitive appetite that incline us to act or not to act in regard to something felt or imagined to by good or evil' (*CCC* 1763); among these, 'the most fundamental passion is love, aroused by the attraction of the good. Love causes a desire for the absent good and the hope of obtaining it; this movement finds completion in the pleasure and joy of the good possessed' (*CCC* 1765). Passions move us; whether passions move us towards or away from God depends upon the soundness—or freedom—of our will. If the passions are to serve us, rather than mastering us, reason must do the work of governing them. Even if the passions are neutral they are nevertheless a gateway to sin. So promoting the sort of moral action that keeps the passions in their place is essential to the flourishing of the moral life.

Hunger offers an illustration of the way in which the passions may ensnare us. As an impulse, hunger needs to be regulated for the sake of health, but it can carry a spiritual dimension as well. We know what can happen to us physically if we allow ourselves to be ruled by appetite. So we make choices about when and what to eat, and we may choose to endure hunger to improve our physical or spiritual well-being. Regulating the passions is likewise essential to preserving our freedom and avoiding sin.

Conscience

The moral life has to keep passions in their proper place: whether we see them as neutral or always bad, 'enslavement to one's passions' impairs the conscience (*CCC* 1791). The *Catechism* describes moral conscience as the human being's 'most secret core'; in this 'sanctuary' a person 'is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths' (*CCC* 1776). The conscience is essential to the moral life because it guides a person 'at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil' and 'judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil' (*CCC* 1777). A well-formed conscience

makes judgements in accordance with reason, but it is not to be reduced to prudence. Rather, as Cardinal Newman expressed it, ‘conscience … is a messenger of him who … speaks to us’ (*CCC* 1778). That is, conscience is not an organ of deliberation but of hearing. Human beings may look within for discernment, but guidance does not come from conscience alone: it comes *through* conscience.

When our impulses get the better of us, then we are in danger of falling into sin. This happens gradually. Being subjected to our impulses might lead us to violate our conscience. It might seem like no big deal. I know I shouldn’t have a quick snack now; my husband and I are meeting for a celebratory meal in half an hour. But those brownies just (p. 370) look too good. It is a trivial example, and not serious sin. The repeated violation of conscience forms a habit, though, and the habit of overriding the voice of our conscience can deafen us. The habit of giving in to our impulses can make it harder to resist them in future. When we have lost the battle with our impulses, then the passions can lead us into sin by turning our attention away from the considerations that allow us to regulate them. Hunger, to continue with the same example, is always to be satisfied as and when we feel it, regardless of the circumstances. Our passions come to rule us, rather than the other way around. When that happens, we can lose the ability to hear our conscience or to follow its dictates, and we are apt to fall into habitual sin.

Formation of conscience is essential also because, like reason or the image of God itself, conscience indicates a capacity, similar to a talent that must be cultivated and nurtured. The *Catechism* reminds us that ‘It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. The requirement of interiority is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination, or introspection’ (*CCC* 1778). Yet the education of conscience is not a matter of knowing rules but knowing God (see for example, Jer 17:9–10.). Rules (for example, doctrine) help us in our discernment, but cannot take the place of an attentive, well-disciplined spiritual ear.

Conscience enables us to act in accordance with our nature, that is, as creatures made in the image of God, destined for union with God.

Sin

I have mentioned sin at various points in the foregoing discussion, but it is worth turning the focus of attention to the topic of sin before considering the communal character of the moral life. The disorienting force of sin misdirects the will and causes human beings to rely on creation rather than the Creator for happiness.

For Gregory of Nyssa, sin corrupts the inclination of desire and the guidance of reason, which ought to direct a person towards the ultimate good: God. He explains that the Fall cleaved humankind from the strengthening power of God. Gregory illustrates this dynamic using the analogy of a lamp. He writes:

> Now in the case of a lamp when the flame has caught the wick too much and one is unable to blow it out, one mixes water with the oil, and by this means dims the flame. In just such a way the adversary deceitfully mingled evil with man's free will and thus in some measure obscured God's blessing'
>
> (*Cat Or*. 6; Gregory of Nyssa 1954: 280–281).

Thomas also insists that the right use of reason and avoidance of sin comes by grace and not merely by human determination. A well-formed conscience operates in accord with reason. In fact, reason's capacity 'to judge aright through a certain fellowship with [divine things] belongs to that wisdom which is the gift of the Holy Spirit' (*ST* I–II, q. 45, (p. 371) a. 2). Without this gift, reason is apt to go astray, often dragging the will along with it. Note that the real work of fighting sin consists not in a redoubling of human effort, but a clearing of any blockages that might obstruct the Holy Spirit and the gift of reason (see also *ST* I–II, q. 74, a. 5).

The Communal Character of the Human Vocation

Reflecting the image of God ever more clearly is hard work. Fortunately, it is not work we do alone. As the *Catechism* reminds us, 'the divine image is present in every man [and] shines forth in the communion of persons' (*CCC* 1702). While this does not imply that we do not each bear the image of God individually, it does suggest that being in relationship with others is an essential aspect of our being human. (Our being made male and female is often taken as evidence of this. See for example, O'Callaghan 2016.) Not only does our being made in for relationships characterize our humanity: community life challenges us to live more consciously into the likeness of God. We ought also to note that our being in the image of God places us in a particular relationship of care for the whole of creation. (See ITC 2004)

'Love for neighbour is a primary task for all Christians', according to the longer rule of Gregory's older brother, St Basil (Harrison 2010: 70–71). We cannot perform this task in isolation, nor can we be adequately shaped for it without some form of training and practice. We cannot live as members of Christ's body (or in a Christian family for that matter), and still conceive of ourselves as autonomous and self-sufficient individuals. We live by a different law, a law of love, which cannot be obeyed without reference to others—including enemies. In family life and in the Church we receive training (ideally) in the form of life and the way of love commensurate with living in the image of God.

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Virtue and Catholic Moral Theology

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the possibility of a Catholic ethics based on the notion of virtue. Although the notion of virtue has been much discussed in recent years, and was central to early Christian ethics, for much of modernity it was a neglected concept in Catholic moral theology. After considering the shift that has again brought the concept of virtue to prominence, the chapter assesses different current models for virtue ethics. The remainder of the chapter argues for a contemporary Thomistic model of virtue ethics, arguing that St Thomas offers the most philosophically coherent model, and one that is also Christologically focused.

Keywords: ethics, virtue, person, Thomas Aquinas, act, will, love

IN modern and contemporary Catholic thought, there has been some resistance to presenting the theme of virtue as the foundation of ethical reflection. This resistance partly stems from the view that Scripture emphasises commandments, whereas virtue finds its roots in Greek philosophy. Moreover, those who resist the theme often conflate virtue with Pelagianism, in so far as virtue is attributed to those who possess an autonomous capacity to achieve the good. Seen in this way, much Protestant theology has serious reservations about any ethics of virtue because it seems to contradict the principle of gratuitous justification on the basis of faith (Herms 1983). In Catholicism, virtue emerged as a theological problem in modernity with the question of ‘religious Americanism’—a view advocating that ‘the active virtues are to be privileged above contemplative ones and natural virtues above supernatural ones’—which was condemned by Leo XIII in 1899 (DH 3343–6). Even in recent times we find some who prefer the Christocentrism of the norm over the supposed naturalism of virtue (Balthasar 1975).

In this chapter, the implicit theoretical (philosophical and theological) strands in the proposed Catholic ethics of virtue will be drawn out by retracing the question’s history, both ancient and recent. First of all, I will sketch the secular eclipse of this theme in modern accounts of morality, and identify the reasons for the recent return to the topic of virtue. Second, I will highlight some key problems that emerge within discussions about the

ethics of virtue. In the third place, I will propose the necessary paradigm shift that is required for a truly theological discussion of virtue. In the fourth and fifth sections, I will compare prevalent conceptions of virtue in the field of virtue ethics with a recently re-evaluated and authentic Thomist account. Finally, I will delineate a moral theology of virtue that is Christologically grounded.

(p. 374) The Eclipse and Return of Virtue

Until a few decades ago, it was fairly unusual to find the theme of virtue taking centre stage in Catholic moral teaching. In the period immediately following Vatican II, the debate centred on normative moral questions regarding such matters as: the existence of 'intrinsically evil' and 'specifically Christian' actions, the autonomy of moral reason and the primacy of conscience. At best, virtue appeared as only practically relevant—recognised as the easiest way of executing that which was prescribed by precepts- and of merely edifying and pedagogical value. There was certainly no epistemologically determining significance for virtue that merited specific theoretical attention. The encyclical *Veritatis splendor* (1993), which expressed a magisterial evaluation of some current tendencies in Catholic moral theology, makes only marginal mention of the theme of virtue. However, throughout the encyclical we see a flowering of the principle that the solution to certain normative ethical questions can only be found through a paradigm shift, by '[placing] oneself *in the perspective of the acting person*' (*Veritatis splendor* 78).

The eclipse of virtue in modern accounts of morality is therefore due to an understanding of action which renders it superfluous; whereas in the ancient classical patristic and medieval moral tradition action was a key concept. The post-Tridentine Catholic manuals thus viewed virtue as a part of the formation of confessors, who had to judge actions performed by the penitent—just as a judge externally evaluates morality in relation to the law, on the one hand, and to conscience, on the other (Theiner 1970). The dynamic and constructive perspective of 'the good that is to be achieved' (as it would have been in the ancient tradition) had been substituted by 'the right thing one must do', determined by conforming to precepts established by the divine or human lawgiver and informed by the judgement ultimately obliged by conscience. In this approach, virtue is emptied of any foundational role and is relegated to a secondary executive function, relevant at best for pedagogy.

The return of virtue as a theme in Catholic ethics is manifest in various ways and is related to multiple philosophical currents. First of all, there is the rehabilitation of virtue in phenomenology (a line of thought represented by Max Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann, Vladimir Jankélévitch and Dietrich von Hildebrandt). This line of thought attributed to virtue the role of offering an emotionally dynamic perception of moral values, and of furnishing an adequate response to those values as a reaction against the formalism of a Kantian ethics of duty. Second, there is the rediscovery of the Thomist doctrine of the virtues, and in particular the role of prudence (a line of thought represented by Josef Pieper, Marie-Michel Labourdette, Thomas Deman, Servais Pinckaers and, more recently,

Jean-Louis Bruguès and Romanus Cessario). These figures succeeded in expanding the interpretive approach of second scholasticism and neo-scholasticism, which had focused on the question of law. This made the full scope of Thomas's reflections upon the subject in the *Summa Theologiae* more accessible, especially his emphasis on (p. 375) the intrinsic finality of action, starting with the intrinsic principles which dynamically guide action.

Third, following Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1981), Anglo-Saxon philosophy has engaged in a wide debate, bringing about a new and fuller awareness of the theme of virtue, restoring it to its proper place amid key concepts in Catholic ethics. The important protagonists here are Elizabeth Anscombe, Philippa Foot, Iris Murdoch, Edmund Pincoff, Gilbert Meilaender and Stanley Hauerwas. Delineating a vast historical horizon with great insight and theoretical force, MacIntyre's work denounces the shipwreck of modern ethics after the Enlightenment. Only scattered fragments of an ethical theory remain in the turbulent sea of ethics, without a coherent system that provides secure navigation. Its inadequacies and aporias result from its fundamental presuppositions and cannot be overcome without abandoning that original conceptual framework. There is, then, a dilemma: either Nietzschean nihilism or a return to an ethic of Aristotelian virtue. In this context, however, virtue cannot be refounded merely by adding a chapter to modern treatments of ethics, or by a different emphasis. Instead, as we shall see, a radical paradigm shift is required.

Contemporary Problems with the Ethics of Virtue

In a programmatic essay for an alternative ethical position, the English philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe (1958), a student of Ludwig Wittgenstein, proposed abandoning concepts of duty and moral obligation, typical of modern ethics, as nonsensical. When the idea of God as lawgiver is put aside and an attempt is made to construct an ethics *etsi daretur Deus non esse* ('as if God did not exist', in the words of Hugo Grotius [1583–1645]), then the concepts of duty and obligation become empty. In order to identify the ends of action meriting attention, Anscombe proposed starting with human interests and desires. Thus, philosophical psychology and the theory of action take precedence over any ethical proposition.

Following the launching of that *ballon d'essai*, an intense debate ensued between neo-Kantian and neo-Aristotelian philosophers regarding the dilemma of epistemological primacy: 'virtue or duty?' Neo-Kantians like William Frankena (1988) and Bruno Schüller (1983) recognised that principles of duty without virtue are impotent, but they also maintained that virtue without such principles is blind and is thus a priori epistemologically subordinate to principles. Only by first defining what constitutes a just action can we then define the right attitudes. In the final analysis, the only true disposition (*Grundhaltung*) is that which orients us towards accomplishing the good indicated by practical reason, on the basis of a priori principles of duty. The neo-Aristotelians responded to such objections

saying that virtue is not blind, but instead it is virtue that allows practical reason to grasp the good in concrete situations.

(p. 376) During the 1980s, an Anglo-Saxon debate about bioethics emerged along the same lines. Principalists (such as Tom Beauchamp and James Childress) and proponents of virtue-based medical ethics (such as Edmund Pellegrino, David Thomasma, Marx Wartofsky and Edmund Erde) debated the dilemma: 'principles or virtue?' (Shelp 1985). The former group proposed establishing some fundamental universal rules for ethical debate that were acceptable to everyone, and which did not depend on particular anthropological visions. The solution to specific cases in discussion must be deduced from these principles (autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice). The latter group promoted a 'bioethics of virtue', arguing that the abstract and vague nature of principles does not allow for any true accord with reality, beyond a merely formal character, whereas only concrete moral experience offers meaningful content. For the most part, the centrality of the moral subject is again brought to the fore, but in the attempt to define the physiognomy of medical virtues, rather than deferring to anthropology, reference is made instead to determined cultural and social contexts of action.

Another development in the debate about the adequacy of concepts to resolve ethical problems is the dilemma of 'norms or virtue?' Proponents of deontology criticise the practical futility of referring to virtue when difficult questions must be resolved. Reference to the subject's virtuous dispositions results in indeterminacy, and ultimately tends towards subjectivism or the risk of relativism. On the other side, proponents of virtue ethics will emphasise the insufficiency of norms for identifying and describing a truly good action (Murdoch 1989).

Certainly, neither side in this debate denies the utility of norms as guidelines for an initial approach to moral problems, but norms are not sufficient when we consider the infinite variety of contingent situations in which concrete actions occur. Amid this infinite variety we need the capacity to perceive ethically relevant particulars, which does not diminish the importance of the correct application of rules, but instead demands an ethical intelligence furnished only by virtues (Blum 1994). Just as MacIntyre asserts (1981), virtues 'are dispositions not only to act in particular ways, but also to feel in particular ways'. Moreover, the ethical cannot be reduced to dilemmas that must be resolved. Indeed, it is much more complex than rule-following: there exist, for example, morally good acts that are not obligatory, and some that fall in the area of supererogation (Konrad 2005).

From this quick panoramic sketch, I suggest that an adequate ethical vision cannot put aside the concepts of virtue *or* duty, principle *or* norm. In particular, an integrated theory is needed which allows for the fecundity of a hermeneutic circle linking moral virtue, prudence, and practical rationality (Abbà 1989). The decisive role of prudence within the dynamics of practical rationality expresses the necessary involvement of the moral subject not only in their intellectual capacity but also in their moral dispositions. Ethical principles do not provide their own evidence, but are made evident in the practice of the fundamental good in which the ethical subject realises a good life. It is in this ideal that the

original evidence of principles is offered, (p. 377) which in turn must have recourse to virtue for the concrete determination of that which is truly good.

Moral norms represent a secondary reflection on and distillation of the knowledge of those who are virtuous. Negatively, norms indicate that certain types of actions are in themselves, always and in every case, contrary to the rationality of virtue (they are 'intrinsically evil'). Positively, norms signal a path for us to follow. In any case, norms, for their evidence and for their correct application, require reference to virtue, and in particular to prudence (Melina 2001). The complementarity affirmed here can be expressed in two convergent ways. First, there is a circularity between ethical principles and virtues: virtue is based upon truth and goodness, so as to evade relativism and subjectivism. But, in the second place, virtues have a cognitive role not only in realising, but also in determining, the concrete good.

From this one can also grasp the inadequacy of the theory of 'the fundamental option', widespread among moral theologians, but criticized by the magisterium (*Vertitatis splendor* 65–70). Within this theory the moral quality of the subject does not depend on choices concerning circumstantial actions, but rather is determined by a fundamental or transcendental decision, which deals with morality as such or the relationship with God. In reality, only particular choices that are effectively accomplished manifest the value or the fragility of the moral subject; accomplishing them requires the actual presence of virtue and not merely a generic disposition of principle.

A Paradigm Shift

As I have already said, the rediscovery of the theme of virtue implies not only the re-evaluation of a previously neglected chapter in ethics, but also the adoption of a new paradigm in relation to modern ethics. It is captured in the notion of a transition from 'third-person' ethics to 'first-person' ethics (Hampshire 1949; Abbà 1989). Third-person ethics is concerned with an observer's perspective (a judge or a confessor), who, in order to determine moral culpability, evaluates an external act according to its conformity to ethical norms and considers the internal act and its aspects solely from this perspective. The human act is performed as an event that happens in the external world, as an *operatum* ('something which has been done') that more or less conforms to a law. In this view, virtue is a secondary and marginal factor regarding the ease of executing certain acts. At most, it assumes the poor profile of a habit which diminishes freedom, in perfect correspondence with vice.

It seems clear that the third-person point of view is in harmony with the limited scope and horizon of post-Tridentine manuals of Catholic moral teaching. These manuals were fundamentally designed to prepare confessors to secure a judgement, in the light of clear precepts, on a penitent's confession. In this regard, Dominicus M. Prümmer (1935) for example, distinguished between the *esse* (p. 378) *physicum* (exterior aspect of an event) of a human act and its *esse morale* (its accidental quality), obtained by considering the transcendental relation between the physical act and the law. In the light of legal precepts,

the acts, were subdivided into licit and illicit acts, obligatory and supererogatory acts. From this point of view, proportionalism shared the same extrinsicist position regarding the theory of action, despite proposing diverse criteria for deducing the morality of actions. Even for proportionalists, human action is primarily an exterior event that happens and provokes a change in the state of affairs. However, its moral evaluation will depend not upon its permanent relation to a fixed rule, but rather upon the balanced deliberation (*Güterabwägung*) of possible pre-moral goods and evils which might result from the act.

Instead, so-called 'first-person ethics' concerns itself with the perspective of the subject, the author of the action. The person is not simply called to follow rules in the execution of self-contained, isolated acts, but to achieve excellence in an action that steers the subject towards its own fulfilment within a unified historical event. In this perspective, the privileged aspect is the intrinsic *telos*-orientation of the person's action, whilst the virtues come into play as key elements and core principles for the construction of a good act. The virtues are anything but habit (in a negative sense), and describe freedom in pursuit of excellence in practice (Pinckaers 1978).

The perspective of the subject as author of morally excellent conduct takes into consideration the interior process of the action's gestation, which sees that act as a building block in the constitution of the subject's moral identity. Attending to the interior act and the intentional dynamic of its construction takes on a primary importance then, starting with one's affectivity, cultivated desires, and motivating passions, to those choices oriented towards a deliberated end, until the effective execution of the act itself. In this way, emotions are decisive for moral formation insofar as they sustain or mislead prudence (Hursthouse 2001). In particular, admiration has a special relevance among all the emotions because it allows for the perception and emulation of another's virtuous actions (Samek 2009).

Within this horizon, it becomes possible to consider action in and through temporality, and therefore as part of the progres towards the ideal to be attained. Attention is also given to the relational context of community (Hauerwas 1981), which offers a lived tradition and exemplary narratives that, beyond their comparative function, offer a historical context within which to place one's personal actions. Narratives propose not only rational content and precepts, but also lived examples that enable us to identify and thus interpret emotions and educate our affections.

The great narratives of Holy Scripture are actualised in the life of the Church and become the generative context for the meaning of Christian action. An ethics of virtue thus provides a much wider and more valuable approach to the Bible and Tradition than a norm-focused third-person ethical approach, which is limited to searching for permanently valid and binding precepts in order to deduce specifically Christian norms from rational precepts that are universally valid.

(p. 379) Which Virtue? Comparing Contemporary Conceptions

In the varied panorama of contemporary virtue ethics, one must recognize that although the same label is used, there are profoundly diverse conceptions of virtue in play that reflect different anthropologies and theories of action. Not all of them are adequate for establishing a Christian ethics, not all of them are in harmony with the demands of objectivity and universality. Following the work of Abbà (1989), one may classify a few versions, but these are not always adequately distinct from each other, and often are mixed in new syntheses of doubtful systematic coherence.

The first conception of virtue, as inspired by the Stoics and, more recently, by a Kantian strain has already been alluded to earlier. Here, the only moral value that is recognised is the formal principle of the subject's good will. Virtue is thus identified with a 'fundamental decision' (*Grundhaltung*), understood as an act of pure will, which aims only at the a priori form of moral being. Hence the uniqueness of virtue and its a priori character. The passions are seen as pathological factors that disturb the rationality of action and the purity of its motivations—they must be repressed or at least controlled by the will. There is an operative dualism in the anthropology of this view, which does not capture the complexity of the human subject, and a theory of action that does not foresee the contribution of affectivity to the construction of the morally good act.

The position of Thomas Hobbes has been widely influential in modern ethics, treating virtue as a 'quality of social life' that is needed to remedy the insufficiency of established rules. In this view, morality is seen as a function of the exterior social task: the attempt to avoid harm, secure communal life, and work towards a better world. This ethical view neglects a consideration of the interior and formal aspect of morality, which is directed instead towards the pursuit of exterior social well-being. Practical rationality is reduced, as a consequence, to the technical calculation of a cost-benefit analysis.

Even the ethical proposals inspired by Aristotle do not always succeed in providing an accurate critical analysis. Sometimes, a return to desire and subjective interests as the foundation of morality leads to the configuration of the virtues as 'character traits' (Foot 2002): subjective dispositions that do not guarantee an orientation towards a good end in itself. In the absence of a theory of *recta ratio* (right reason), which is intrinsically constitutive of virtue, the possibility of resolving eventual conflicts of divergent virtuous interests is missing. Indeed, even the criterion for distinguishing between vice and virtue is missing, leading to the irrationalism of subjective taste.

Alasdair MacIntyre develops a similar Aristotelian position, seeing virtue as 'excellence in the practice of the good life', and this manages to partially overcome the reservations noted above. By 'practice', MacIntyre refers to a human activity that is socially established, which promotes immanent goods within the activity itself. With the category of a 'good life', MacIntyre introduces a synthetic framework for the evaluation of (p. 380) individual practices and acts. Moreover, the category of the 'good life' refers us to the tradi-

tion of a community and its constitutive narratives as criteria of value that surpass mere subjectivity. Yet even this is still not enough to ensure the universality and objectivity of a rational reference that could resolve to resolve the conflicts of public debate in our pluralistic societies. The basis of MacIntyre's proposal remains indebted to the social position of a Hobbesian variety, and does not offer a criterion of rationality internal to virtue that is coherent with the position of first-person ethics. The decisive point is to integrate a coherent account of practical rationality into a theoretical account of virtue, which resolves the different shortcomings of the currents of thought examined above: formalism, social exteriority, subjectivism and irrationalism, traditionalism and historical-cultural relativism.

Over the past few decades, there has been a renewed approach to the thought of St Thomas Aquinas (seen for example in Pinckaers, Kluxen, Abbà, Rhonheimer, Schockenhoff, Melina), which emphasises an articulated theory of practical reason and of its proper form of knowledge. For Thomas, moral virtues are rooted in rational and universal principles. The same principles of natural law are also 'seeds of virtue' (*semina virtutum*), through which human reason participates in the ordering work of the eternal law of Divine Wisdom. However, these rational principles are not sufficient on their own for determining the good of a contingent action. Moral virtues need to intervene and among them, in particular, prudence. In this way, one avoids the opposing positions of either rationalism, which would like to deduce adequate moral knowledge for concrete actions from given a priori rational principles; or irrationalist subjectivism, which abandons virtue for the immediacy of interests and desires or reconnects them to the social environment of a tradition of a particular community. The ethics of virtue recognizes the originality of moral knowledge (in respect to being purely speculative) in perceiving the truth about the good without falling into emotivism.

The Ethics of Virtue according to St Thomas Aquinas

In the *Secunda pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, St Thomas offers an account of the ethics of virtue. It is of great value even today because of its correspondence with experience, its articulation of affectivity, will and reason in the unity of the moral subject, and for its openness to a theological perspective. Above all, St Thomas offers a unique perspective in his enquiry: that of the *motus rationalis creaturae in Deum* ('the movement of the rational creature towards God'). At the same time, this position indicates the specificity of the human condition-by which the human being lives his or her free self-determination in time and through a multiplicity of acts- and the difficulties that are encountered along the path to realising the ultimate end of beatitude.

(p. 381) From a theological point of view, the supernatural character of the goal that is offered to human freedom (that is, the vision of God in God's essence) exceeds the possibilities of nature, and implies the intervention of divine grace, thus postulating an operative synergy. But from a human point of view, these same presuppositions present seemingly

insurmountable obstacles. For example, how might we ascribe unity to our multiple, various, fragmentary, and unstable actions, so as to allow for the preparation of perfect action in and through time, but ultimately realised in eternity? The free movement of the person seeks to receive order, direction, and stability, without however falling into pre-established, rigid, and mechanical behaviour. The same is true for practical reason, when it must illuminate extremely complex and varying situations in which choices are made, and yet cannot find adequate help in the general orientation towards the good provided by *ratio naturalis* ('natural reason'). The theory of the virtues elaborated by Thomas on the basis of Aristotelian thought, while treasuring patristic and monastic thought, responds precisely to these questions.

Above all, Thomas treasures the Aristotelian definition of virtue as a *habitus operativus bonus* ('an operative predisposition towards the good'; see *ST* I–II, q. 55, a. 3) and as a *dispositivo perfecti ad optimum* ('a disposition of natural faculties towards their own perfection'; see *ST* I–II, q. 55, a. 2). The moral virtues are ways of being that, by perfecting the faculties involved in acting, prepare the subject for the appropriate action. *Habitus* (mode of being) constitutes the middle term between what we are by nature and what we are called to be, dynamically directing us towards good actions, almost constituting a second nature which empowers us in light of the end to which we are called.

It should be noted, however, that the virtues do not only concern executive effectiveness, that is, the external ability to do good actions. The virtues are internal to, constitutive of, the best action. In fact, virtues refer to the interior act of choosing: they are *habitus electivi* ('habits of choosing'; Rodriguez Luño 1988). In other words, virtues do not predispose the person to uniform and standardised behaviour, but rather enable the freedom of choice that must be creative and adequate amid changing situations in life. In this sense, one cannot draw a parallel between virtue and vice, because with virtue, human freedom is empowered rather than constricted. In the more technical jargon of scholasticism, this concept is expressed in the following way: the proper end of virtue is not the object of the choice (*id quod eligitur*), but rather the basis upon which the choice is made (*id cuius gratia eligitur*). Thus, the act of choice is always ulterior to and decisive for the confirmation of personal orientation and self-determination. In short, a Thomist ethics of virtue does not do away with the primacy of action and the centrality of choice.

This doctrine of virtue forms an integral part of a complete anthropology, wherein the subject of the action is the person as *corpore et anima unus*—a unity of body and soul (cf. *Vertitatis splendor* n. 48; *GS* 14). The moral subject is not simply pure spirit or autonomous freedom; it is also corporeal, instinctual, emotive, sensible, and passionate. None of these components may be repressed or removed. They must all be integrated into a harmonious totality, which finds its point of reference in practical reason. In the light of the true good, practical reason orders everything with reference to that goal. In (p. 382) this way, virtue overcomes the difficulty and fragility of human action, making it possible to accomplish the good with ease, stability and joy. Moral virtues are therefore a principle of integration for the human being; they do not sacrifice any of his or her faculties, but rather order them in a hierarchy established by reason in the light of the end.

Such a conception reflects a positive evaluation of human creatureliness, including the body with its emotive and passionate reactions.

In the Thomist and Aristotelian conceptions, affectivity is not something external to reason. Rather, when it becomes virtuous through being imbued with rationality, it in turn contributes to knowledge of the good, according to a specific modality that Thomas calls knowledge by 'connaturality' (D'Avenia 1992). Such informed activity consists precisely in moral knowledge which needs the presence of virtue in the subject in order to be completed. The same prudence, the virtue that perfects the practical reason in its dynamic knowledge of the good in concrete actions, does not depart from universal principles known naturally and immediately. Instead, it occurs through particular principles offered by moral virtues that are its proximate ends (*ST* I–II, q. 58, a. 4–5). In other words, it is in the affective reaction when faced with an attainable good that the virtuous subject perceives an end worthy in itself of being willed and which, when acted upon, will promote the achievement of communion with the beloved person.

In order to overcome an anthropology that speaks of quite distinct faculties within the soul, each viewed as distinct powers with their own ends, it is important to emphasise that the ethics of virtue, conceived in this way, reflects the primacy of the personal subject as such, which finds in itself resources for a dynamic orientation towards its own perfection (*dispositio ad optimum*). The natural dimension is accomplished in the personal, and has its apex in empowering the communion of persons (Noriega 2001). In this way, the ethics of virtue opens up on to an interpersonal dimension of love.

Moving in the direction of an Augustinian definition given by Peter Lombard, Thomas says: 'Virtue is a good quality of the mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us, without us' (*virtus est bona qualitas mentis, qua recte vivitur, qua nullus male utitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operator. ST* I–II, q. 55, a. 4. See Lombard, *Sent.* D. 27, *c.* 1, d. 27, q. 5). This definition—historically elaborated by Peter of Poitiers (Cessario 1991)—grasps key aspects of virtue. Virtue is concerned with the *mens* (the spiritual dimension of the person) at once both cognitive and affective. Since virtue regards the will and not merely a technical ability, it is not possible to use virtue for wrongdoing: virtue makes the person good *as such,* as a person; not only in some partial ability. A good musician knows how to play perfectly, but can choose to make a mistake without ceasing to be a good musician. As Aristotle explained, technical capacities are improved through error. However, in the case of moral virtue, deliberate error by free choice simply shows that one does not possess virtue. Human flourishing is precisely the personal area delimited by virtue (see Schockenhoff 1987). But, above all, the Augustinian definition indicates the origin of virtue as God's action in us and thus opens up a theological dimension.

In particular, this theological dimension is made more evident with another of Thomas' remarks: *virtus dependet aliqualiter ab amore* ('Virtue depends equally on love': *ST* (p. 383) I–II, q. 56, a. 3, ad. 1; Granada 2010). This allows us to grasp the virtuous dynamic of freedom in the interpersonal context of the affective relation: that is freedom moved

by love forms affective dispositions in such a way as to promote interpersonal relationships. The Thomist claim fully recognizes the specificity of the dynamic of the will. At the origin of the act of the will qua personal act is a love of a personal quality. Also at the origin of the virtues is an initial, affective love—a gift that is given which calls one to fulfilment in the real union of love with the beloved (Pérez-Soba 2001). Now virtues are located in the dynamic of love that guides action as ways to enable the personal subject to give an adequate response through his or her choices—in particular, through the choice of a gift of self, which fulfils love and makes possible the communion of persons.

Starting from this rooting of virtue in love opens the way to full recognition of the role of God's action in the person through *caritas*. For Thomas, the whole body of virtues depends upon *caritas*, which is 'the mother and root of all the virtues, inasmuch as it is the form of them all' (*ST* I–II, q. 62, a. 4). The free gift of friendship with God involves an affective unity that moves the whole body of virtues by conferring upon them the ultimate end of communion with God. The dynamism here is inverse to that of a merely human action. Whereas in the latter, as has been shown, virtues serve as mediators in reaching real union from affective love through the specific choices in which love can be communicated, now a radical reconfiguration of the moral subject takes place. Starting from union with God by participation, *caritas* becomes the principle and motor of a virtuous dynamism that—through the infused virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit—empowers excellent and meritorious actions (*ST* I–II, q. 63, a. 3).

In an original insight by St Thomas, the excellence of Christian action, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is identified with the Beatitudes. Indeed, the actions of the disciples who followed Christ—poor, humble, meek, suffering, thirst for justice, merciful, pure of heart, peace-maker, persecuted—are now realised through *caritas* as an anticipation of eternal beatitude, a mysterious and real participation in that end on which hope and therefore the dynamism of action can be founded. *Spes beatitudinis* ('hope for beatitude')- the hope of eternal beatitude - is at the same time *beatitudo spei* ('beatitude in hope'), a mysterious prize, whereby the seed of a mysterious participation in the joy of the resurrection is already hidden in participation in the cross of Christ (*ST* I–II, q. 69). Certainly, the beatitudes possess a paradoxical character in that the happiness that they anticipate is hidden under the veil of an apparent worldly defeat. Moreover, *caritas* is already present in earthly life as a *communicatio beatitudinis* ('communication of blessedness') for those who live in friendship with Christ; and those who share in the destiny of the beloved Son of the Father, the Messiah who was rejected by humanity (*ST* II–II, q. 25, a. 3).

The Theological Dimension

How are we to understand the preceding discussion about the Thomist conception of virtue, which roots itself in love as a dynamic principle and thus remains open to its (p. 384) own fulfilment in *caritas*—that is, 'a kind of friendship between the person and God'? My claim has been that this account can overcome the objections made against integrating virtue with Christian ethics. My account offers the possibility of a referral to a

dynamism of action that has a Christocentric and interior character, rather than a purely exterior one. In effect, many of the attempts from the 1930s onwards to Christologically ground Christian morality (Melina 2001) have interpreted the relationship of Christian action to Christ by resorting to such categories as ‘exemplar’ ‘norm’ or ‘ontological foundation’, thus condemning such attempts to extrinsicism. However, the category of virtue allows for a specifically Christian theological dimension that starts from the dynamic perspective of the subject-agent, which construes its action in relation to its own fulfilment in love.

Two great medieval masters, St Bonaventure of Bagnoregio and St Thomas Aquinas, offer very interesting theological accounts of an authentic ‘Christocentric virtue’. The Franciscan teacher, in fact, sees the moral life of the Christian as a ‘participation in the virtue of Christ’. Christ is ‘the model of virtue to which we should attend’ (*exemplar excitativum virtutum; In III Sent*. 35, 1, 2), an ascending centre that draws us towards the Father, ‘by virtue in virtue’, until we ascend to the apex of conformation to Him in the *caritas* of the cross. The imitation of Christ both hinges upon his being ‘Incarnate Word’—historically visible and encountered, intimately present to everyone—and ‘Inspired Word’. The imitation of the exemplar becomes an intimate participation in his virtue, aiming towards total conformity with the ‘fire of love’ (*incendium amoris*) of the cross, much like that insuperable mystical experience of St Francis at *La Verna*.

The Christocentrism of Thomas is less apparent than Bonaventure’s, but it can be detected by closely reading the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa*, noting how he follows on from the *Secunda Pars* by presenting Christ as the foundation. In effect, Thomas says that the influence of Christ communicates *caritas* in the Christian moral life through the action of the Spirit (*lex nova*), perfecting and mobilising every virtuous organism through this theological virtue. In this way, that unique synergy in the action of the baptised that results from the human participation in the divine was already present in the action of Christ (Larrú 2004). In other words, it is through love that Christ becomes the centre of our life.

The commentary by the Angelic Doctor on the phrase ‘for me, to live is Christ’ is particularly suggestive (Phil. 1:21; cf. *mihi vivere Christus est* in *Super Ep. ad Philpp. Lectura* I, III, n. 32). Life, he claims, is characterised by movement. In fact, it is said that living beings have in themselves the principle of their own movement. Therefore, it can be said of Christ that he is the ‘life’ of human beings, inasmuch as he is the principle of the movement in us that is life itself. Indeed, properly human life is the free movement of action through which we orient ourselves towards an end, in which the perfection of our life is realised in God. Now, Christ moves our life and is the principle of our actions as the desired and loved end. Moreover, Christ is the principle of our life, inasmuch as our love for Him moves us in every one of the actions that we fulfil. The moral virtues—generated by *caritas*—are dynamic dispositions that enable love to express and fulfil itself in an excellent action.

(p. 385) To conclude, I would like to draw attention to the Marian and ecclesial dimension of the moral theology that is operative in my account of a Christian ethics of virtue. The

Church accompanies the journey of the Christian through history. According to St Augustine, the Church is a 'rule for the moral life' (*morum regula; De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae*, 30, 62), that is, the mother and teacher of the moral life. The Church makes available to us the narrative in which action finds its meaning through her proclamation of sacred history. Through her sacraments we find the nourishment for our formation in virtue. In the saints we find example, teaching and encouragement for conforming our lives to Christ. Most holy Mary, mother and prototype of the Church, is also an incomparable example of virtue that the Christian is called to emulate in following Christ. In particular, that supreme virtue of obedient availability, lived by the Virgin in the Annunciation, allows us to welcome the divine life and to let it mature in us until it reaches its fullest expression.

Translated from the Italian by Joshua Furnal

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The Natural Law in Catholic Ethics

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter presents Catholic teaching on the natural law as the product of a conversation over millennia. After offering some basic conceptual distinctions, the chapter begins by considering ancient non-Christian sources for Christian reflection on the natural law, especially Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. The chapter then considers relevant biblical texts and the teachings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Attention is particularly played to Thomas's adaptation of Classical traditions, and his argument concerning the unchangeablness of natural law. The final section of the chapter focuses on discussion of natural law after the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the work of Germain Grisez and John Finnis.

Keywords: natural law, Aristotle, Augustine, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Germain Grisez, John Finnis

THE most important post-Vatican II work on natural law has been conducted either by historians working on the thought of Thomas Aquinas and of his sources (such as Aristotle and Augustine), or by other scholars engaged in systematizing ethical ideas taken from this tradition. In these writings (whether historical or more systematic), the nature of natural law may or may not be an explicit theme; whether it is or not, however, has no bearing on whether a work is about natural law. Proponents of natural law are such not because of what they say about natural law but because they defend a certain type of moral theory, that is, one that follows the traditional sources in recognizing that some things are moral (or immoral) because they are in accord with (or contrary to) human nature. This all makes any account of natural law in post-Vatican II Catholicism a historical account of very large scope since, almost by definition, a scholarly interest in natural law is an interest in the same ethical theory that was taught by the Catholic Church before the council—indeed, well before the council, since it invariably involves the appropriation of ideas both medieval and ancient.

This is not to say, however, that natural law theory does not develop. The Catholic understanding of natural law is the result of a millennia-long conversation in which foundational contributors to the tradition have also sometimes said things incompatible with natural

law—and those things have had, therefore, to be discarded and alternatives preferred. Adjustments have also had to be made due to altered societal circumstances. The only way to locate a particular scholar or group of scholars within the tradition of natural law theory is to provide an overview of this development and its limits. Although the number of authors it can consider is necessarily limited, the present chapter attempts to provide such a overview. It concludes with a brief consideration of the one major new (post-Vatican II) attempt to give an account of natural law within Catholic ethics, posing the question to what extent it is consistent with the tradition of which it claims to be a part.

(p. 389) Basic Distinctions

According to Thomas Aquinas, natural law is a participation by rational creatures in the eternal law. The eternal law is the very intelligibility of God as the source or highest principle of order in the universe. Since the nature to which the term ‘natural law’ refers is human nature, the reason that participates in the eternal law is reason that arises, develops, and is systematized in the way appropriate to embodied rational animals who need to exert themselves in order to bring order to the various inclinations and activities that arise spontaneously from their nature. So there can be, has been, and always will be development in their understanding of natural law, for they can always bring further attention to the same issues, especially as they present themselves in different circumstances.

Besides natural law and eternal law, Catholic ethics also recognizes divine law and human law. Divine law comes to us primarily through Scripture, interpreted by the Church’s teaching office. It is necessary in order to direct human beings toward ends not known by natural means but only through divine revelation. It also serves as a corrective to human reason which is prone to misconceive the content and proper application of the natural law. Such corrective progress can also be made independently of divine law, but it is more difficult and risky, due to the fallibility of merely human reason.

Human law can be said to be ‘derived’ from the natural law in the limited sense that, if a human ‘law’ is incompatible with the natural law, it is not a law at all. Human laws closely bound up with precepts of natural law get their effectiveness as laws not from their being formulated (or ‘posited’) as human laws but from the natural law itself. Human laws that, when there is a legitimate reason for variation, specify how the natural law shall be applied, get their effectiveness as laws from human law, although (as already stated) they get their intelligibility as laws from the natural law. Although a human law that is incompatible with the natural law is no law at all, for reasons intrinsic to law itself—which exists for the common good—the threshold for ceasing to be a human law (of the second type) is high. Laws issued by legitimate authorities have presumptive obligatory force since, if they did not, that itself would harm the common good.

All law, says Aquinas, requires promulgation in order to be binding. How this occurs in the case of divine and human law is fairly apparent. The promulgation of the natural law occurs in human nature itself: in its inclinations, understood not just as subjective feelings but also as inclinations to perform the actions typical of human beings, such as con-

structing houses, composing music, and educating children. Such activities, in which human beings engage naturally, are *prima facie* in accordance with natural law.

Ancient Non-Christian Sources

According to Catholic natural law theory itself, natural law exists also outside of Christianity. So, if the theory is a true one, one would expect to find that natural law is (p. 390) an important theme in the writings of those who, independently of Christianity, have turned their attention most skilfully to such questions as what is human nature and how ought human beings to act. This expectation is not disappointed; we find especially in Plato and Aristotle thoroughgoing, although not complete or definitive, investigations of natural law. One sometimes reads that natural law theory began with the Stoics and that in Plato and Aristotle we find at most the occasional use of the term 'natural law' (or similar terms), understood, however, in ways that do not correspond to the way in which the later tradition understands natural law. In fact, recognizable variants of the term 'natural law' do appear in both Plato and Aristotle in contexts that suggest they were referring to what later theorists refer to as the natural law (in Plato see, for instance, *R.* v,456c1–2 [Plato 1987: 695] and *Lg.* iii,690c1–3 [Plato 1987: 1285]; in Aristotle see *EN* v,7,1134b18–19 [Aristotle 1984: 1790–1791] and *Rhet.* i,13,1373b4–6 [Aristotle 1984: 2187]). But arguing about terminology and particular passages is a distraction from the real issue, which is whether a particular thinker recognizes that acting justly is a matter of acting in a way consistent with natural inclinations—and, in particular, with the natural inclination to behave rationally, reason being the ultimate judge of whether an action performed is consistent with human nature and with natural law.

We find such an approach throughout Plato's works but expressed in an especially engaging manner in the *Gorgias*, where the character Socrates refutes the theory of Callicles, who maintains (like his counterpart Thrasymachus in the *Republic*) that 'might makes right'. Callicles posits an opposition between law and nature, insisting that law is just the attempt on the part of the weak to protect themselves from those who are stronger; on the other hand, to exercise one's own will and to get what one wants is to act according to nature. 'I believe', he says, 'that nature herself asserts the same: that it is just that the stronger and more capable man has more than the weaker and less capable' (*Grg.* 483c8–d2; Plato 1987: 266). He goes on to praise the imperialist Xerxes and others who, he claims, follow this natural law: 'I believe that these men do these things in accordance with the nature of justice and, by God, in accordance with the law of nature and surely not that law which we set up' (*Grg.* 483e1–4; Plato 1987: 266). The position of Socrates (which is to say, of Plato) is quite opposed to this. He holds that the desire to dominate is unnatural and that nature, which inclines us toward the calm pleasures and not towards those that take possession of tyrants and other bullies, coincides with law, i.e. with natural law. 'The terms we assign to the regularities and orderly dispositions of the soul are "lawful" and "law" (whereby individuals become law abiding and refined): these are justice and temperance' (*Grg.* 504d1–3; Plato 1987: 287).

Aristotle takes over Plato's idea that the pursuit of the calm pleasures and the exercise of their corresponding natural practices are proper to justice and law (see, for instance, *EN* i,8,1099a5–31 and x,5,1175b24–29; Aristotle 1984: 1737 and 1858) but he is more articulate than Plato about the problem of the relationship between the principles implicit in natural inclinations and their application. In *Rhetoric* i,13, we read the following remark: 'Universal law is that which is according to nature, for, as everyone divines, there is something universally just (and unjust) by nature, even in the absence of any mutual intercourse or explicit agreement' (*Rhet.* 1373b6–9; Aristotle 1984: 2187). Aristotle then (p. 391) cites two principles, formulated by authors prior to himself, which are part of this natural justice: first, that loved ones should be buried (Sophocles); second, that living creatures ought not to be killed (Empedocles). The subsequent discussion makes it apparent that Aristotle believes that these two principles might be invoked legitimately in order to argue (in the courts) for the derogation of certain positive laws. Thus, even given a legitimate decree ordering that Polynices not be buried (*Rhet.* i,15,1375a34–35; Aristotle 1984: 2190), all people know in their hearts that Antigone acted justly in burying her brother. Aristotle does not expand on the application of the principle of Empedocles, although he does speak in the same chapter about the legitimate use of arms (*Rhet.* i, 13,1374a32–33; Aristotle 1984: 2188), so we can be sure that his point is not a pacifist one but that it always makes sense to appeal, in the face of contrary law, for the life of any living creature—because there is in man a natural inclination urging him to believe that the lives of all living creatures are (*qua* lives) good.

Both Plato and Aristotle recognize a relationship between natural law and the divine (what Aquinas calls the eternal law). In the *Laws*, for example, Plato speaks of Homer as inspired when he considers the origins of family law and the law of cities: 'He says these things … as sayings in harmony somehow with both God and nature' (*Lg.* iii,682a1–2; Plato 1987: 1276). According to Aristotle, as we have already seen, 'everyone divines' (*manteuontai—Rhet.*i,13,1373b7; Aristotle 1984: 2187) the universal law which is according to nature. In *Politics*, he considers the case of the man (or men) who so excels in moral excellence that others in a prospective city bear no relation to him. 'Such a man is as if a god among men,' he says (*Pol.* iii,13,1284a10–11; Aristotle 1984: 2037); in the best city, 'all that is left, what appears to be established by nature, is for all to obey such a one readily' (*Pol.* iii,13,1284b32–33; Aristotle 1984: 2039).

Among the Stoics, the idea that natural law is connected somehow with a divine order is even more prominent, although their divinity tends to be an impersonal force rather than a personal God. According to a third-century AD source, Chrysippus (*c.*280–207 BC), one of the founders of Stoicism, began his book *On Law* with the following:

> Law is king over all things, both human and divine. It must be sovereign, ruler and leader over things noble and ignoble; the just and the unjust is determined according to this standard. For living beings who are political by nature, it is the commander of that which is to be done, and the forbidder of that which ought not to be done'

(Long and Sedley 1987: 432).

According to Philo, a Jew of the first century BC who adhered to Stoic ethics, 'the constitution of the various peoples is an extension of the nature which is sovereign over all, for this universe is a great city which makes use of one constitution and one law. This is reason in nature, which commands that which is to be done and forbids that which ought not to be done ' (Philo, *Ioseph* 28-29; Philo 1966: 157). For Cicero, one of our main sources for Stoic ideas and an important influence on St Augustine, 'there exists a true law, right reason, in agreement with nature, conformed to reason, diffused among all men, constant and eternal, which by commanding urges on to duty and by forbidding (p. 392) deters from crime' (*rep.* iii.22.33; Cicero 1928: 211; see also *leg.* i.12.33; Cicero 1928: 333–335). This 'doubled up' language of commanding and forbidding, found in these three (and also other) Stoic sources, turns up throughout subsequent natural law theory, a sure indication when it occurs of Stoic influence.

The Biblical Basis

Since Catholicism is a religion of the book, natural law as recognized in Catholic ethics must have a basis in Scripture, even though, according to Scripture itself, natural law can be known independently of Scripture (divine law) and even though not all that belongs to natural law is made explicit in Scripture.

The most important biblical texts for Catholic ethics are found in Paul's Letter to the Romans, at Rom. 1.16–32 and 2.12–16 (related texts would include 1 Thess. 4.3–8 and 1 Cor. 1.21). Paul acknowledges in these two texts that righteousness comes to Jew and non-Jew alike, although men, especially non-Jews, have suppressed the truth by their wickedness. In visible creation, God had made known to them his own invisible self and so they are 'without excuse' with respect to their own evil acts. With their darkened minds they worship images instead of God, and so God has handed them over to their lustful and otherwise intemperate practices: women, contrary to nature [*para physin*—Rom. 1.26], lying with women; men similarly lying with men—all such individuals in the grips of envy, malice, and disobedience. For such sins, says Paul, the Jews will be judged by *the* law; non-Jews ('Greeks') will be judged by the law that speaks in their conscience [*syneidēsis*], which enables them (at least theoretically) to do by nature what the law requires, their inner reasonings 'accusing or also excusing' them as appropriate (Rom. 2.15). Almost all of the key issues in subsequent Catholic natural law theory come to the surface in these first two chapters of the Letter to the Romans, which is to say, at the very beginning of the Church's existence. These include the character of our natural knowledge of the precepts of the natural law; the role of conscience, which is inextricably bound up with that same knowledge; the connection between ethics and knowledge of God's existence; the relationship between natural and divine law; and, finally, the bearing of natural law on the moral characterization of particular immoral acts.

Other scriptural passages important for natural law theory include the several formulations of the golden rule: ‘Everything that you wish that men should do to you, even so you do also to them’ (Matt. 7.12; see also Luke 6.31 and Tob. 4.15]. The golden rule is important because it is often cited as a moral principle that is self-apparently true (see, for instance, Aquinas, *ST* I–II, q.94, a.4, ad.1). This does not mean that the rule is not also part of revelation: the Matthean version of the rule (quoted just now) is followed in the same verse (Matt. 7.12) by the remark: ‘for this is the law and the prophets’. This same issue arises with respect to the ten commandments, which are presented in the (p. 393) Bible not as speaking to man in his heart naturally but as given by God to Moses (Exod. 20.1–17, 34.11–27 and Deut. 5.6–21). This does not prevent Aquinas, for instance, from maintaining that the commandments are part of the natural law. At *ST* I–II, q.100, a.1, he suggests that they are very close to the highest principles of the natural law and so recognized immediately by reason as to be followed; in *ST* II–II, q.122, a.1, they are described *as* ‘first principles of the law, to which reason immediately assents as to most manifest principles’.

Two Church Fathers

In the earlier Church Fathers, remarks about the natural law are somewhat scattered and unsystematic but important nonetheless as evidence that natural law theory is not a late accretion to Christian doctrine. Sometime between AD 155 and 160, Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, associates the golden rule with the second ‘great commandment’, that you should love your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22.39) (*dial.* 93.2; Justin 2003: 144). He also writes some things remarkably similar to what Aquinas says much later about whether the knowledge of justice can be obliterated from an individual’s conscience. By nature, says Justin, all men know that adultery, fornication, and murder are wrong. When they commit such acts, they know that they are acting unjustly, ‘with the exception of those who, possessed by an unclean spirit—corrupted by their upbringing, by sordid customs and by evil laws—have lost their natural concepts or, rather, who have quelled them or hold them in check’ (*dial.* 93.1; Justin 2003: 144).

A couple of centuries later, in the twelfth of his ‘Homilies to the people of Antioch on the Statues’, John Chrysostom (*c*.347–407) argues that natural law (*nomos physikos*) or conscience (*to syneidos*) is antecedent to at least some of the commandments of the decalogue. ‘Why is it then that when He says, “Thou shalt not kill”, He did not add, “because murder is evil”? Since He taught us this presupposing conscience, and as to those who know and understand even so He speaks’ (*stat.* 12.9; Chrysostom 1994: 421–422). Later in the same homily, he refers to Paul’s remark about conscience in Rom. 2.15, arguing that, if there were no such thing, how is it that legislators with no knowledge of Moses or the prophets have written laws ‘about marriages, about murders, about wills, about deposits, about fraud, and about a thousand other things?’ (*stat.* 12.12; Chrysostom 1994: 423). It is apparent that Chrysostom did not limit the influence of natural law to the natural inclinations but extended it into the details of human law. In the subsequent homily (the thirteenth), Chrysostom speaks of the golden rule as part of a natural law within us of ‘that which is good and noble and that which is not’. A few paragraphs later he says

that we know by our natural lights that prudence (*sōphrosunē*) is ‘both noble and useful’. He was aware, however, that this did not mean that men necessarily follow natural law or prudence. ‘Knowledge of virtue he has placed within us by nature, but the action and the right ordering he has committed to our choice’ (*stat.* 13.7–8; Chrysostom 1994: 428)

(p. 394) Augustine

In Augustine (AD 354–430), we find more developed ideas on natural law and a more conscious effort to integrate non-Christian ideas into Christianity than in any previous Christian author. *De libero arbitrio*, book one, composed in 388, is the source, at least for Aquinas, of the distinction between eternal and human (‘temporal’) law (*lib. arb.* 1.6.15, 1.15.31; Augustine 1953: 120–121, 130–131). Eternal law, says Augustine, is immutable and is called therefore ‘highest reason’; only with respect to it is human law ‘legitimately created and legitimately altered’. This understanding of the relationship between the two types of law causes the interlocutor in the dialogue identified as Augustine to remark famously, ‘It seems to me that that which is not just is not a law’ (*lib. arb.*1.5.11; Augustine 1953: 118). (The remark has found its way into legal jargon as the phrase, usually attributed to Augustine, *lex iniusta non est lex*; the idea shows up, however, as early as Plato [*Hp. Ma.* 284d1–e1, *Lg.* iv,715b2–4; Plato 1987: 1537, 1306].) This principle has become an object of scorn to legal theorists of a positivist bent who regard it as undermining authority and, therefore, as a maladroit intrusion by moralists into the properly legal sphere; but, in fact, Augustine maintains a presupposition in favour of the obligatory character of human laws. He is against judicial interpretation of the law; once temporal laws are established, he says, ‘it is licit for a judge to judge according to them, not regarding them’. His understanding of the legislator’s role is not much different: ‘It is permitted for pure souls to recognize the eternal law not to judge it’ (*vera rel.* 58; Augustine 1953: 255).

This is not to say, however, that Augustine does not recognize the possible development of applications of the natural law. That he recognizes the need occasionally to change human law is manifest in his calling it ‘temporal law’. Such change is clearly called for when those who originally put forward directives had not ‘pure souls’ and were, therefore, not attentive to the eternal law (*vera rel.* 58; Augustine 1953: 255); but Augustine also speaks of ‘temporal law’ as law that is *by definition* alterable: ‘So, if you please, let us call that law “temporal” which, although it is just, can be modified justly according to the times [*per tempora*]’ (*lib. arb.* 1.6.14; Augustine 1953: 120). In a number of places, Augustine speaks of only partial understanding of the natural law even among its greatest exponents. In *Contra Julianum opus imperfectum*, he criticizes Plato, for instance, for advocating in the *Republic* (v,464b5–6; Plato 1987: 703) the promiscuous use of women and therefore violating the ‘natural laws of propagation’, that is, the ‘desire implanted in the human race’ to be sure of one’s own progeny. But what Plato advocated—and was criticized for by Aristotle (*Pol.* ii,1–-2; Aristotle 1984: 2000–2002)—at least recognized the natural love of progeny, which he wanted to make more universal by preventing citizens from knowing which woman had born whose son. This, says Augustine, is at least to acknowledge ‘that same voice present in the heart of all fathers’, which caused Cicero to write to

his son, ‘Only by you, of all men, would I wish to be surpassed in all things’ (*c. Iul. imp.* 6.22; Augustine 1999: 657).

But Augustine is also quite prepared to diverge from Cicero, from whom he derives so many of his ideas on natural law. A good example would be his *De doctrina christiana*, which is heavily dependent on Cicero’s rhetorical works and yet opposed to Cicero’s (p. 395) occasional blasé acceptance of the use of rhetoric for ‘shameful causes’ (*Her.* 1.4.6; Cicero 1954: 11–13). The issue is, however, complicated. Cicero does speak of the need for wisdom in addition to eloquence as, for example, at *De inventione* 1.1 (Cicero 1949: 3). At one point, Augustine actually cites the latter passage (*doctr. chr.* 4.5.18; Augustine 1995: 203), but he immediately adds that pagan writers on rhetoric say such things only reluctantly.

Augustine is not against the use of rhetoric by Christian teachers, for he realizes that rhetorical incapacity on their part would mean that the exponents of falsehood might ply their trade eloquently and convincingly, while the exponents of truth speak in a way that bores their listeners and impedes their believing (*doctr. chr.* 4.2.4; Augustine 1995: 197). But Cicero (and other pagan orators) erred in failing to see that rhetoric is essentially—that is, by natural law—for the propagation of truth. We find in the world, says Augustine, ‘many who want to lie—no one who wants to be deceived’ (*doctr. chr.* 1.36.86; Augustine 1995: 235). He goes on immediately to argue that it is better to be lied to than to lie, ‘since it is better to suffer iniquity than to commit it’ (*doctr. chr.* 1.36.87; Augustine 1995: 235). This is most likely a reference to Plato’s *Gorgias* (e.g. 469c2; Plato 1987: 252) (which is also largely about rhetoric and about which Augustine would have learned through Cicero); but, if it is a reference to Plato, it is also an implicit criticism of him, since, as Augustine knew, Plato was quite prepared to countenance the ‘noble lie’ for the sake of the common good—even if he is inconsistent on this (See *R.* iii,414b8–c17–e6; Plato 1987: 658 and *Lg* v,730c1–6; Plato 1987: 1317).

The issue of the morality of lying (and of the proper use of rhetoric) is not often mentioned in discussions of natural law, but it ought really to be one of first issues historians examine in order to determine how an author understands natural law and how that author fits into the tradition of its exposition. Augustine wrote two works about lying—*De mendacio* (394) and *Contra mendacium* (420)—and each understands it as speaking (or otherwise communicating) in a way that goes contrary to what one knows in one’s own conscience. In *Enchiridion* he says explicitly that language was instituted not so that men might lead one another astray but in order to make their thoughts known to one another (*ench.* 22; Augustine 2005: 287–288). In studying the issue of truth-telling and lying it becomes apparent that natural law is not about humanly natural inclinations *as such* but rather about inclinations to *do* things that have intelligible structures. In the historical debate over this issue we see, too, that understanding natural law is not so much a matter of determining what all (or most) humans agree about but rather of considering moral arguments in order to determine which of them hold up best under philosophical scrutiny—or, for Christians, also under theological scrutiny. Regarding lying, Augustine disagreed

not only with his pagan predecessors but also, occasionally, with his Christian confreres, such as Jerome (*ep.* 82; see Augustine 2001: 315ff).

How Augustine understands the relationship between natural law and Christian grace becomes apparent in his interpretation of the first two chapters of Romans in his *De spiritu et littera* (412). He interprets Rom. 2.14–15, where Paul speaks of the non-Jews who follow the law although they have it not ('they demonstrate the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness'), as speaking about (p. 396) those non-Jews who have become Christians and have, therefore, the benefit of grace and revelation in understanding the urgings of conscience (*spir. et litt.* 26.44; Augustine 1997: 170–171). This interpretation has in turn been interpreted as Augustine's rejecting pagan theories and acknowledging that fallen human beings are utterly incapable of knowing anything about the natural law, depending for their moral bearings utterly on the grace that comes from Christ. But this is hardly compatible with what Augustine says earlier in the same work in interpretation of Rom. 1.18–21, where Paul says that those who commit various abominations (women lying with women, men with men, etc.) are without excuse since they know God. Says Augustine, 'Notice how [Paul] does not say that they are ignorant of the truth but that, in their iniquity, they have held the truth off' (*spir. et litt.* 12.19; Augustine 1997: 155). This points once again to the fact that it is no argument against natural law theory to note that not everyone agrees with what the proponents of natural law understand to be right or wrong, for at the very core of the theory is the idea that not everyone understands—or acknowledges—what their own consciences say to them.

Thomas Aquinas

In Aquinas's remarks explicitly and specifically about natural law, we find not much that is new; his prominence in discussions of natural law is due largely to the fact that he understood so well the tradition of legal philosophy before him and that he was able to sift out the false and to shape the true into a clear and consistent subpart of his more general ethical theory (that is, his theory of natural law). It also helped that this general theory was of extraordinary breadth and precision.

The main locus of Aquinas's specific remarks on natural law is the so-called 'Treatise on law' in *ST* I–II, qq. 90–97, near the beginning of which he sets out the now classical terminology which we have already seen: 'eternal law', 'divine law', etc. The question dedicated to natural law (q. 94) begins with an article on whether natural law is a *habitus*, that is, a state of the soul. He acknowledges that calling it such is not without sense but that strictly speaking it is a work of reason, 'just as a proposition is a certain work of reason'. In other words, natural law has an intelligible structure. It emerges, certainly, from a psychological state but has more to do with what emerges from that state than with the state itself. As such, it is more readily susceptible than the psychological state to philosophical (and theological) analysis.

This becomes very apparent in the subsequent article (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.2), where Aquinas sets out an elaborate comparison between the structure of theoretical reason and that of practical reason (the latter being subject to natural law). Whereas the principle of non-contradiction is the basic principle of theoretical reason, he says, the basic (or first) principle of practical reason is the precept that 'good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided'. The doubling up of this principle (pursue good *and* avoid evil) is typical of Stoic natural law theory, although many of the other concepts employed by (p. 397) Aquinas in this article are taken either from Euclidian geometry or from Aristotle. Just as in theoretical reason below the first (and so highest) principle are located secondary principles such as 'things that are equal to one and the same thing are equal to each other', so in practical reason, in a roughly analogous position, we find precepts such as 'ill is to be done to no one' (*ST* I–II, q.100, a.3) and 'one should act rationally' (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.4).

Aquinas develops this comparison between theoretical and practical reason partly in order to bring out the latter's intelligible structure, but he is well aware that practical reason behaves in a manner very different from (for example) geometry, for, whereas the conclusions of sound geometrical demonstrations are as free from exceptions as the premises from which they are derived, the 'quasi conclusions' (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.4, q.94, a. 6) of practical reason allow of exceptions as they become more specific and therefore more distant from the primary precepts of natural law. The example that Aquinas uses of a secondary precept is that deposits (that is to say, things given to one in trust) are to be returned; it follows from the precept that one should act rationally. The 'deposit precept' comes from Plato, who couples it with the precept prohibiting lies (*R.* i,331c3; Plato 1987: 580), although Plato and Aquinas approach these precepts very differently.

Plato, as we have seen, thinks that lies are sometimes permitted; Aquinas follows Augustine (and claims to be following Aristotle) in saying that they are never permitted (*ST* II–II, q.110, a.3). Plato and Aquinas both hold that the deposits precept is inapplicable when, for instance, the deposit is a weapon and the person asking for its return has in the meantime gone insane. Plato, however, sees this as just one more reason why we ought to regard the concrete moral universe as ultimately unintelligible and to place our confidence in the more elegantly intelligible universe of the Forms. From that perspective also the occasional lie is permitted. Aquinas, on the other hand, like Aristotle, is confident of our ability to analyse the concrete moral universe and to find intelligibility there also; the natural law against lying is part of that intelligibility.

This very attention to the concrete detail demands that Aquinas acknowledge with Plato that the deposits precept does not always have moral force (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.4; also *ST* II–II, q.57, a.2, ad.1). But his explanation of such failures of laws to apply is not a throwing up of his hands and taking refuge in a universe of mere ideals but an immersion in the details of how moral law works in the concrete. It sometimes happens even in the biological world, he says, that nature 'wants' to generate an animal but is impeded from doing so. The same thing can happen with secondary precepts of the natural law: the precept has legal force, but unfortunate circumstances, such as the insanity of the owner of a weapon, impedes its issue in a particular obligation. The more detailed a precept is (if, for in-

stance, added to the deposits precept is the requirement, ‘within one day of being asked for the deposit’s return’), the more ways there are in which its legitimate application might be impeded.

Although all precepts have force (in their own way), a person may lack knowledge of lower precepts due to a deformation of his or her reason, the result perhaps of poor upbringing (some society might, for instance, praise and encourage piracy), or of a ‘corrupt state of nature’ (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.4). By this latter, Aquinas does not mean that nature itself or natural inclinations might cause one not to understand the relevant ethical truth (p. 398) but rather that a tendency towards unnatural behaviour might become so ingrained that it becomes ‘natural’ (in another sense) to engage in it. Aquinas is more expansive on this point earlier in *ST* I–II, at q.31, a.7, where, drawing heavily on Aristotle’s *EN* vii, 5,1148b15–31 (Aristotle 1984: 1814), he says that unnatural delight might become *per accidens* natural because of a corruption of nature existing in the person. This might happen for physical reasons—disease, for example, or an inborn defect; or it might be psychological, as when, through habituation, ‘certain individuals delight in eating men or in sexual intercourse with beasts or with males’. Regarding the latter, Aquinas might have continued to draw on the same passage in Aristotle and mentioned that such corruption might be due to abuse in childhood.

In *ST* I–II, q.94, a.4 and q.31, a.7, Aquinas does not mention St Paul’s remark about God’s handing the pagans over to their unnatural practices (Rom. 1.26) and their being ‘without excuse’ (Rom. 1.20), although elsewhere (at *ST* II–II, q.154, a.11), when again discussing unnatural acts, he does make the connection. Does this mean that, even when the knowledge of a precept of natural law is obliterated from or prevented from ever entering into one’s practical awareness, one is still guilty according to natural law? What is the role of conscience here, of which Paul speaks in Rom. 2? Aquinas holds that one is obliged to follow even an erroneous conscience (*ST* I–II, q.19, a.5). Thus, if someone has been brought up among pirates and genuinely believes he is obliged to ply the tribal trade, he must do so. But, if his not knowing that piracy is wrong is due to any negligence on his part, in doing that which (at one level) he is obliged to do, he sins—he is ‘without excuse’—since ignorance for which one is responsible is not the type of ignorance that exonerates morally (*ST* I–II, q.19, a.6).

Can Natural Law Change?

Aquinas asks a question in *ST* I–II, q.94, a.5 that often comes up in contemporary discussions of natural law: can natural law change? His answer is that natural law can often be added to, as when a divine or human law imposes a particular way of following a precept of natural law. And with regard to lower precepts such as the deposits precept, he says, a change might even involve a subtraction, as when the deposits precept applies usually but not in certain cases. But more interesting is a subsidiary issue he confronts in this same article, in the analysis of which he again follows Aristotle—in particular, the pas-

sage from his *Rhetoric* (mentioned earlier), in which Aristotle suggests that it is a universal and natural law that no living creature ought to be killed.

An objection to the idea that natural law does not change cites Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*: 'the common possession of all things and a single liberty [of all people] is of natural right (*de iure naturali*)' (5.4; Isidore 2006: 117). But, continues the objection, such prescriptions have been changed by human laws—there is private possession and servitude—so the natural law is clearly changeable. Aquinas, who accepts the authority of Isidore, replies that there are two ways of being 'of natural right': one is the standard (p. 399) way, as when 'one should act rationally' informs a number of lower precepts (such as the deposits precept); another is the way in which nature urges nothing to the contrary, 'just as we can say that man is naked of natural right because nature does not provide clothing but human ingenuity (*ars*) introduces it'. Isidore's prescriptions are to be understood in this latter way: private possession and servitude have been introduced by human reason for the benefit (*utilitatem*) of human life (*ST* I–II, q.94, a.5, ad 3). Later in the *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas distinguishes natural right (*ius naturale*) from the 'law of the nations' (*ius gentium*). Servitude, like private possession, he says, pertains to the law of the nations and the latter is natural only in the sense of something that follows upon more fundamental and, strictly speaking, more natural inclinations (*ST* II–II, q.57, a.3c, and ad.2. See also Isidore's *Etymologies* 5.6; Isidore 2006: 118)

Aquinas does not mean that nature has no preferences whatsoever regarding possession and servitude. In a sense nature favours clothing and in a sense it disfavours it: to an extent, it depends on the temperature, although Aquinas's point is simply that nature does nothing to actually provide clothing. Similarly, in a sense nature favours common possession (in times of need) and in a sense it does not (in order to avoid disputes) (*ST* II–II, q. 57, a.3; q.66, a.1–2), but it does nothing about it either way. Regarding servitude, Aquinas says that we naturally resist it (*ST* I–II, q.2, a.4, ad.3; *Sent.* 4.36.1 *sed contra*) but also that we naturally desire it as bringing order to society (*ST* II–II, q.57, a.3, ad.2). Servitude would include what we call 'slavery' but also the relationships between masters and serfs, nobles and domestic servants, kings and subjects, employers and employees, etc. But, again, nature does not do anything in order to erect such relationships, which are of human devising. The same cannot be said of the natural inclination to do no ill to others: nature actually puts this inclination into the soul of man and so it is an instance of the first way of being 'of natural right' set out in *ST* I–II, q.94, a.5.

Aquinas discusses the relationship between servitude and nature also in a passage in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*: 4, q.36, a.1, ad.2. Citing passages in Aristotle's *De caelo* [ii,6] and *De generatione animalium* [ii,3] (and also, in the corresponding objection, Gregory the Great's *Magna moralia* 21.15.23), he argues that the 'first intention' of nature—which always aims at perfection—is against servitude, although the 'second intention' allows it as the best that can be attained given naturally occurring conditions. This approach is important for it provides a means of explaining and also guiding alterations in the applications of the lower precepts of natural law. Servitude is the obvious case in point. If certain types of servitude are now regarded as contrary to human

dignity (and, therefore, natural law), that is because conditions are such that human society can now follow more closely the first intention of nature. (In the case of true slavery, its moral character was simply misunderstood by many within the natural law tradition.) To use a more topical example, if capital punishment is now regarded by the Catholic Church as increasingly difficult to justify, this would be because conditions have changed in ways that demand that we adhere more closely to the first intention of nature, as identified by Empedocles and Aristotle: that life be considered good and worth protecting simply because it is life.

(p. 400) The New Natural Law Theory

The one major post-Vatican II advance in the Catholic understanding of natural law is the result of collaboration between Germain Grisez and John Finnis, joined by a number of other scholars who have occasionally worked with them and/or espoused some of their ideas. These latter include Joseph M. Boyle Jr, Robert P. George, Patrick Lee, and William E. May. The theory is a complex one, having been developed, tweaked, and clarified over a period of more than fifty years, beginning with (to take a convenient starting point) Grisez's 1965 article, 'The first principle of practical reason: a commentary on the *Summa Theologiae* 1–2, question 94, article 2'. Grisez's contribution becomes gradually more explicitly theological, in particular, in the three volumes that eventually appeared of his projected four-volume *The Way of the Lord Jesus*; Finnis's has remained more philosophical and legal. Notwithstanding the orientation of his 1965 article, Grisez makes little effort to defend his ideas as consistent with Aquinas's thought, although he certainly maintains that they are consistent with the Catholic understanding of natural law. Finnis has written a major book entitled *Aquinas: Moral, Political and Legal Theory* (1998) in which he defends Aquinas and follows him, although not slavishly.

How does this New Natural Law Theory compare with the tradition of natural law theory as depicted earlier? It makes its keystone Aquinas's first principle of practical reason ('good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided'), and places this within human nature itself and so certainly satisfies the most basic criterion for classification as a natural law theory. It expounds this precept, however, and its attendant precepts in terms of what it calls 'the basic human goods' (such as the good of life, the good of knowledge, and the good of practical reasonableness), an approach certainly not inconsistent with Aquinas, although he does not use the idea of goods in quite the same way. The theory has been criticized for its adherence to the thesis, sometimes associated with Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–76), that an 'ought' cannot be derived from an 'is' and so for an alleged refusal to acknowledge the role of metaphysics in ethics. However, Grisez and Finnis have replied (compellingly) that the distinction between practical and theoretical reason is important also in Aquinas and Aristotle, who are not forced as a result of maintaining the distinction to exclude metaphysical considerations from ethics.

In *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (351–366), Finnis defends, against certain legal positivists, the adage *lex iniusta non est lex* and thereby puts the New Natural Law Theory squarely in a line of natural law thought that includes Plato (especially in the *Gorgias* and

the first book of the *Republic*), Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas (Finnis 1980: 351–366). Both Finnis and Grisez follow Augustine and Aquinas in maintaining that lies are always wrong, connecting this precept with the inclinations inherent to human nature (e.g. Finnis 1998: 154–163; Grisez 1983: 405–412). Like St Paul, neither author hesitates to affirm that certain types of sexual behaviour—women lying with women, for instance, or men lying with men—are intrinsically immoral; and each has defended the Church's teaching against contraception. Indeed, Grisez's first printed defence of this teaching (p. 401) appeared a year before his article on Aquinas's first principle of practical reason and is not unrelated to it philosophically.

In the opinion of the present author, Grisez's reading of Aquinas's remarks on the first principle of practical reason in *ST* I–II, q.94, a.2 fails to appreciate the emphasis Aquinas places on the intelligible structures that emerge *from* the inclinations inherent to human nature. An overemphasis on the basic goods as the objects of human inclinations and choices and a concomitant lack of emphasis on the intelligible structures of exterior acts as analysable separately from—although not existing independently of—the intention with which they are performed (see *ST* I–II, q.18, a.6) has affected the whole subsequent development of the New Natural Law Theory. It has led its primary exponents into tension with authoritative statements by the Church regarding, for instance, the type of therapeutic abortion known as craniotomy. It has occasionally also led them into tension with common sense, as when Grisez claims that, in considering the morality of using without permission an automobile belonging to another, the fact that the automobile belongs to another does not in itself determine the moral character of that act—as Aquinas, in effect, says it does (Grisez 1983: 1. 247).

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Grace and Justification

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This essay explores the Catholic teaching on grace through some of the classic texts and writers. It begins by comparing the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and The Council of Trent's decree On Justification. Although the two differ in strategy (the latter seeking to differentiate itself from emerging Protestant teaching), the Catechism shows itself to be in great continuity with Trent. The essay then considers the teaching of the two most influential writers in the Catholic tradition of reflection on grace, Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas (and some of his successors). Thomas incorporates much of Augustine's later teaching, but offers a more expansive account of merit and sees predestination more as a matter of fore-knowledge than God's causal activity. The essay ends with a treatment of some recent writing on the subject.

Keywords: grace, merit, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Karl Rahner, Trent, predestination, justification

A vision reported by Hadewijch, a thirteenth-century female spiritual writer and theologian active in Brabant, offers a fine orientation to the Catholic teaching about grace. Hadewijch is recounting a visit to her by Jesus (Hadewijch 1980: 268–269, vision 1). Jesus stands at the centre of her spirituality: her life, her writing attests, is one of discipleship to the Christ who has lived, suffered, and died for others, and been raised for human salvation. She has taken up his cross and strives to echo his behaviour as she moves on the way to the God who is her end. In the vision, Jesus expresses his pleasure at her imitation and her progress, but thinks it pertinent to offer a mild rebuke.

She has, he knows, expressed a complaint about his call to her and to all other humans to live by his model and to act as he acted. Of course, he agrees, she tries to act as he did. But, he reminds her, she has noted a crucial difference between herself and Christ, which she thinks relevant to the call to holiness and the possibility of achieving that for those who seek to follow Christ: he is the Word of God become human. He is God, and she has opined, his moral perfection would seem to be due to his divinity. He acts perfectly because he is the perfect God. How, then, can she, who is not God, really do what he asks? Jesus' rebuke does not concern her incarnational Christology: she is correct in thinking of

Jesus as the God become human, the second person of God who without loss to himself as fully divine Word, has through the act of incarnation also become fully human. Instead, Jesus challenges her explanation of his personal holiness, of his ability to act correctly and in a way pleasing to God, and so be a worthy model for emulation. It is not because he is God; throughout his earthly life, he stresses, he did not draw on his divinity to do the morally upright. Rather, his personal holiness—evident in his ability to act in a morally upright way—is due to the grace and virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit with which he had been endowed in his humanity. He as human acts well because of the leading by the Spirit; and, he adds, what holds for him holds for her and of all others who seek to follow his example. Jesus does call people to morally correct action and that action is essential to reaching heaven; but he also gives them the grace and virtue and gifts that make such action possible, so that they might act as he acts. In this brief, vivid scene, Jesus, through Hadewijch, has sketched a Catholic doctrine of grace in its (p. 404) main features. Grace is given by God in and through Christ; grace means the presence of the Spirit in the life of the Christian. Jesus calls to moral action and makes that morally good action possible by grace; that moral action is needed to come to eternal life and that action requires response on the part of the human agent to Jesus' call to discipleship and to the divine initiative in grace.

This chapter will look in more detail at the Catholic teaching on grace as announced in this passage from the great medieval mystic, and will employ rather different texts in what follows. In this sketch of the Catholic teaching, I begin with two ecclesial documents, the pages on grace in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (*CCC*) and, then the decree on justification issued by the Council of Trent (1547). The Tridentine decree is in fact a principal source for the *Catechism* when it comes to grace, but there are differences between the two statements sufficient to warrant their discrete treatment. I then take soundings in the Catholic theological tradition, to indicate the variety of approaches to grace within the broader Catholic consensus on grace. I will look first at Augustine, the doctor of grace, and then at Thomas Aquinas, with a glance at later medieval teachings on grace (associated with Ockham and his followers). The Council of Trent, in fact, drew on all three—Augustine, Aquinas, and the late medieval theologians—in composing its decree on justification, and thus these soundings will add to the appreciation of Trent. The chapter concludes with more recent Catholic teachings on grace, in Rahner and in liberation theology.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The *Catechism's* discussion of grace is found in Part III, dedicated to Life in Christ, in a chapter on Law and Grace (*CCC* 1987–2029). Several graces are mentioned by the *Catechism*. A few have to do with the building up of the Church: 'gratuitous graces' or charisms, such as the gift of miracles or tongues, allow their recipient to work for the benefit of others (*CCC* 2003); the graces of state pertain to various forms and states of ministry in the Church (*CCC* 2004). The other graces noted by the *Catechism* are concerned with the recipient him or herself, with the working out of that person's salvation

with the aid of God. The *Catechism* mentions in this regard habitual grace, and, actual graces (i.e. interventions of God at particular moments of the person's life. See *CCC* 2000). The *Catechism* grants the greatest attention to habitual grace, which is also the case in this essay.

'Grace' as defined in the *Catechism* has many facets. Grace is a gift, given freely by God (*CCC* 1999). God is under no obligation to give grace to anyone; that God does and is generous in the offering of grace, shows the depth of his love for humans and desire to give freely of God to others. Grace involves favour (*CCC* 1996). To be in God's grace means to stand in God's favour; and that is due to God's love, not to any attributes of a human that might be apart from grace. The giving of grace grants the forgiveness of sins: one is forgiven the sins for which one repents and God does not count sin against (p. 405) the recipient of grace (*CCC* 1987, 1989). Grace brings a cleansing of sin. And finally, grace brings new power (*CCC* 1995, 1999). Humans are weakened by sin, both original and actual, and are insufficient of themselves to enter into God's favour or stay in it. Grace reforms the self and makes it capable of the actions that are pleasing to God. Grace, accompanied in conversion by the infused virtues of faith, hope, and charity (*CCC* 1991), establishes in its recipient new potential, a potential that is to be realized in the moral and spiritual field. Such grace is habitual. A habit provides an orientation to action of a kind. It adds potential to its possessor. The grace that is habitual orientates its possessor to God as the end of human existence and provides the ability to do what God seeks of humans, endowed with free will and called to eternal life. Quite aptly, the *Catechism* can speak in this regard of new creation (*CCC* 1999). By grace, the sinner is remade, made anew, moved away from sin and towards God, re-established as a properly functioning moral agent, enabled to act as God wills. By grace, the sinner is newly structured and by the actions promoted by grace, the recipient will grow in grace and towards God.

The *Catechism* employs a traditional conceptual device in proclaiming grace. Life is viewed as a 'journey', a journey of the affections and of moral acts. The end of the successful journey is reached in the beatific vision, when the human journeyer comes in the next life into the immediate presence of God and knows and loves God directly. This direct knowing and loving brings fulfilment to the person, and presupposes God's free and loving decision to share God's own life with human beings. God ordains human beings to eternal life. The path to this end courses through the present life. The present life should be preparatory for the next. The present life is itself distinguished into two states: the state of grace and a state prior to grace when a human is still subject to sin. To come to God as end requires that one be turned in the right direction toward God. At the onset of the successful journey, there must be a conversion away from sin and toward God; conversion is the move from the pre-grace state into the state of grace. The person who has moved into the state of grace is on the right path and with the aid of grace, will strive to do what is morally upright, that will be in keeping with the sort of nature that God has granted this sort of being (i.e. endowed with rationality and will) and the end to which God freely and lovingly has willed eternal life to humans (*CCC* 2002). The one who acts as

God wills, by the grace of God, perseveres in the state of grace and makes progress towards the direct knowing and loving of God in the next life.

In discussing the journey of humans to God as end, the *Catechism* would seem intent on keeping in proper balance two principal convictions. The first is that God takes the initiative in the working out of human salvation. God makes the first move, as it were, whether one is thinking of conversion into grace in the first place or staying in grace by grace-aided good actions. God in grace goes before the person; grace is prevenient. The second principal conviction is that God does not remake or aid the person despite the human or without that person's involvement, through willing and knowing. God does take the first step, but it is incumbent on the person to freely respond to God's prompting. In terms of conversion, the *Catechism* observes that the grace of conversion is resistible (*CCC* 1993). God does not coerce. God lovingly calls the human away from sin and to God as end, but the human must accept that calling. Grace is an offer of forgiveness, (p. 406) of new power; it is up to the person to accept or reject that offer. When that offer is accepted, the person converts and is on the way to God as end. When the offer is rejected, that person remains set in his sin, alienated from God and turned, as it were, in the wrong direction. The *Catechism* maintains the pattern of divine initiative and human response, in the account of the state of grace. Grace remains prevenient and indispensable, but the person now in the state of grace is called on to exercise the will correctly, with the aid of God's grace.

God's grace has multiple effects. To evoke two of the subheadings employed in the *Catechism's* presentation of grace, grace provides both 'justification' and 'holiness'. By grace, a person is justified before God. God forgives sinners by grace and a person is thus considered just before God. But there is a profound ethical dimension to justification; grace transforms the recipient as a moral agent. A person is not simply considered just; by grace that person is actually just, made just, transformed by the infusion of grace into that person's life. And by grace, that person will pursue holiness, to act as God wills for humans called to communion with God. The transformation worked by grace in conversion is not total nor brought to term with the simple infusion of grace. The healing of the effects of sin takes place over time and one needs to grow into one's vocation to holiness. Justification and growth into holiness are a long-term process, in which there will be times of gain and real progress, but with the possibility of lapse or regress, and certainly of temptation away from God. Grace prompts and leads; the person must be open to that grace and be led to correct action. The journeyer will strive to become more and more what grace makes possible and as God wills. But the final completion of the transformation will come only in the next life, when the journey is completed and the person enters into the immediate presence of God.

The *Catechism* affirms merit (*CCC* 2006–11). 'Merit' implies reward. The affirmation of merit marks an interpretation of the reward texts sprinkled throughout Scripture. God rewards. God rewards the good, that is, renders to them what is deserved by their good acts. These good acts earn their reward and do so in justice. Merit thus underscores the involvement of the human as an agent in that person's salvation. But, as advanced in the

Catechism, the affirmation of merit indicates as well, perhaps principally, the meaning of grace and the role of God in the working out of salvation. By grace, God is present and active in the life of the Christian, moving and prompting the one on the journey to the actions that God seeks of those who belong to God. The good works of the justified show the power of God in their lives. In this affirmation of merit as due to grace and as restricted to the state of grace (*CCC* 2010, 2025, 2027), the *Catechism* makes nice use of Augustine, who characterizes reward for merit as grace given for grace (see *Sermo* 298, quoted at *CCC* 2009). Eternal life, the great reward of the life well lived, is itself a gift, rendered to those who have been moved by God's grace to acts pleasing to God. Holiness, rooted in both grace and the correct response that grace elicits, finds its reward.

The Christological shape of grace is asserted throughout these paragraphs of the *Catechism* (*CCC* 1987, 1988, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1999, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2020). Christ's work for human salvation is the source of grace for all other humans. God gives grace (p. 407) in and through Christ. The acceptance of grace comes in the acceptance of Christ as saviour. And by the grace given to the believer, the person who has moved away from sin will grow into holiness, doing so on the pattern of Christ. There is a participation in Christ, a forming of community in which believers receive the grace of Christ that allows them to grow into Christ. That ever-greater conformity to Christ through grace's good actions prepares those who belong to Christ for eternal life. By Christ, those who strive in Christ will be granted a share in the heavenly inheritance. Eternal life can itself be portrayed in Christological terms. Entering into heaven is to receive, as adopted children of God, what pertains to the second person of God as natural Son of God (see Romans 8, cited at *CCC* 2012).

The *Catechism's* presentation on grace is rich in citation. Scripture is quoted throughout, passages from the later writings of Augustine (see *CCC* 2001; and see below), and from the decree on justification issued by Trent (*CCC* 1989, 1992, 1993, 2009, 2016), are quoted to good effect. Gregory of Nyssa is also mentioned with approval to convey Christian perfection (*CCC* 2015, 2028). In addition to these obvious theological sources, the *Catechism* also invokes the saints (Joan of Arc, *CCC* 2005 and Thérèse of Lisieux, *CCC* 2011), a nice reminder that grace leads to action, to instantiation in a form of life and in specific acts that are pleasing to God.

The Council of Trent

The debt of the *Catechism* to Trent goes well beyond what is indicated by explicit quotation. The *Catechism's* teaching about grace is substantially the same as what is proclaimed in the Tridentine decree on justification, and the *Catechism* follows Trent closely in its positive moments. As is well known, the council was innovative precisely in offering for the first time in Church history a formal declaration of what Catholics are to hold about justification. As rooted in Scripture and tradition, the Tridentine Fathers proclaim that justification entails both forgiveness and sanctification (*On Justification* 7); that grace is freely given and a true gift (8); that life as journey requires God's initiative and

the free response of humans, both in conversion and in the state of grace (5, 16); that one's graced good actions lead to eternal life, which is gift but also reward (16); and, that one attains heaven through Christ (4, 7, 16), in whom the members of the Church participate by their faith, hope, charity, and graced actions (6).

And yet there are differences between the Tridentine decree and the *Catechism*, reflecting the circumstances of the council and the needs of the Church at this point in its history. The Tridentine decree was developed in response to the Protestant Reformation. While the *Catechism* sticks to straightforward proclamation, the Tridentine Fathers, along with stating what is to be held on justification and grace, specify what falls outside Catholic truth in light of what they think pertains to the Protestant—in particular, Lutheran—teaching. For Luther, justification is by faith (Luther 1961). Faith is understood in terms of trust: one no longer trusts in oneself or one's abilities to impress God (p. 408) by one's moral strivings; instead, one trusts in God through Christ, accepting God's word of forgiveness in Christ. This teaching is set against the background of a contrast between law and gospel. The law is not a strategy for salvation, a guide to correct behaviour, or warning against sinful action. Rather, the law is given to show people their moral shortcomings and insufficiency; it condemns the sinner and shows the need for Christ. What one cannot do of oneself, God does, and does through Christ. Christ alone is morally upright. By faith in Christ, Christ's righteousness is imputed to the sinner. Christ's righteousness now covers the sins of the believer. In this teaching about imputed righteousness, there is a covering of sins, but the sins remain, as does the sinful action of the believer. The person is thus both justified and a sinner; as joined to Christ by faith, the person's sins are not held against him. The championing of faith understood as trust is accompanied by a downplaying of charity, the pre-eminent Catholic virtue. It is not that Luther does not want people to love. But he rejects charity as essential to the salvation process; one's acts of charity do not make a difference to the working out of salvation and may in fact work against that, if they are done as a way of supplementing or complementing the faith that is trust. That would be to ascribe to the person an ability to contribute through loving actions to that person's reaching of God. Correspondingly, Luther rejects out of hand any talk of 'merit', apart from Christ's merit. Eternal life is not a 'reward' for the good actions of the person, as if they deserve such an end; eternal life is granted to those who are justified, and justification is by faith. Luther, in fact, develops a concerted polemic against merit. Merit bespeaks works righteousness and overstates what people can do before God, and contradicts the gospel message of forgiveness in Christ.

In presenting the Catholic teaching on justification, Trent wants to state that teaching positively, but also to differentiate that teaching from the Protestant and indicate where Protestant teaching has deviated from the truth. In a sense, the format of the decree on justification reflects the double thrust of the Tridentine decree. In the first part of the decree, the chapters set out Catholic teaching in a positive way. In the second part of the decree—the canons—Trent identifies unacceptable teaching on justification and adjacent matters. It pronounces anathema on this or that error. Yet, even in the chapters Trent has a concern to proclaim Catholic truth in a way that warns against possible error (e.g. *On*

Justification 9, 11, 12). There is an added resonance when comparing the *Catholic Catechism* to the Tridentine decree on justification.

The 'journey' model is put to good use in the chapters of the decree. The opening chapters are concerned with the human condition. Sin is taken seriously but not overstated. By sin, both original and actual, the will is weakened, but correct use is not extinguished (*On Justification* 1). Thus, the possibility of correct response to God's prompting to the good is intact. The decree posits two graces as involved in conversion from sin and into the state of grace. The first is a predisposing grace (5). This is given to all and can be accepted or rejected. When it is accepted in faith, the second grace is given, the grace of justification that heals and forgives, and enhances the capacity for good willing and doing. The theological virtues accompany the infusion of justifying grace; it is out of these that the person, now in grace, can believe, hope, and love. The council thus (p. 409) maintains a view of faith that goes back at least to Augustine: faith is primarily cognitive, the acceptance of certain truths necessary for salvation on the basis of the God who reveals these truths. Charity, too, is affirmed in its traditional status and importance for salvation. The faith that justifies is a formed faith, involving the love of the one who reveals saving truth and calls humans to communion with God. By formed faith, one is joined to Christ; Christ as Head sustains his members and they act in imitation of him and by the power that God grants them through him.

Trent's position on merit is subtle. Is there merit in the conversion from sin to grace? Chapter 8 of *On Justification* explicitly states that there is no meriting in conversion. But, the word used there—*promereri*—may have a particular association with merit in the fullest sense, condign merit (Oberman 1964; see however Rückert 1971; McGrath 2005: 345–346). Medieval theologians and their sixteenth-century Catholic successors, knew two main kinds of merit, congruent and condign. Merit as a reminder presupposes justice, which itself involves an equality between the one who putatively merits and the one who rewards. There is the greatest inequality, both ontologically and morally, between humans and God. Thus, when the difference between the Creator and the created is to the fore, and one considers a good act as done by one who falls far short of God, there is no merit in the full or strict sense. There can be, however, a congruent merit; for it is congruent with, in keeping with, God's merciful character to render a reward for the efforts of the person as human. However, a moral act can be assessed from a different perspective, as done by and in grace. And since God is the giver of grace, there is a kind of equality between the act, as graced, and the reward of God; and so it is possible to posit of the act a condign merit. In conversion, there is no condign merit, but by the use of *promereri*, the door is left open for congruent merit, by way of concession to those at the council who in their own analyses affirmed such a lesser merit in conversion.

Merit in the state of grace is unequivocally affirmed (*On Justification*, 16 and canon 32), but without further specifying whether it is condign, or congruent merit, or both, that is in view. But the teaching at the council about life in grace, life in Christ, certainly allows ascribing to acts done in grace both kinds of merit. God has generously and in love willed to humans what is beyond their due as human. The giving of eternal life as the end of hu-

man life is, radically, gift. But eternal life, the Council adds, is also a reward, and for those schooled in Catholic theology, reward and merit go hand in hand. As framed by the council, the implicit affirmation of merit is done in such a way as to meet Luther's concerns. The divine involvement in the good acts that can be termed meritorious is kept to the fore; and there would seem to be no insult to Christ in affirming the value of the graced acts of the people who belong to Christ, receive from his power, and act in imitation of him.

The Council of Trent has worked into its decree several comments about predestination, perhaps in light of the affirmation of predestination, in a causal sense, by some Protestants. The council is clear enough about what cannot be held with regards to predestination, as is clear from the canons attached to the decree *On Justification*. There is no predestination to damnation and God certainly does not cause the sin that qualifies the damned for eternal damnation (canons 6, 17). Rather, humans bring about their (p. 410) own sin and hell is owed to them in justice for their sin. And there can be no certainty of being predestined to salvation (canon 15). Such a certainty would require knowing directly the mind and will of God; and God only occasionally reveals his will for an individual to that person by a special revelation. The council, however, is reticent when it comes to predestination to salvation. In *On Justification* 12 *this* is designated as a 'sacred mystery', but the council leaves it at that. What 'predestination' means is left unexplained. There is diversity in Catholic theology when it comes to the interpretation of predestination. Some great figures, such as the late Augustine and the Aquinas of the *Summa theologiae* had affirmed a predestination to salvation in a causal sense: God in eternity had destined certain people to eternal life; and in their lives, God would work out that election by giving the operative graces (of conversion, and of perseverance) that would bring them to that end. There were representatives of this view at the council; Cardinal Seripando readily comes to mind. Other theologians, however, had thought of predestination rather in terms of knowing: God knows what people do and responds accordingly, giving them what they deserve for their actions, good or bad. In recognition of this diversity, predestination was prudently left at 'mystery'.

Augustine

Augustine's teaching on grace underwent considerable development over the course of his lengthy writing career (for further introduction to Augustine's teaching on grace see Burns (1999); Bonner (1993); Wetzel (1992)). The teaching falls into three main stages (Burns 1980). There is considerable change in orientation and stress between the first and second stages; in the third, he extends the insights that mark the second stage of teaching. In his early teaching about grace, as represented in such writings as the *Confessions*, Augustine is aware of sin but has a fairly positive assessment of the human person. The human person is a seeker of the good, impelled by a desire for what is perfective of the person as human. That end is God, whom all humans desire. By sin, that desire goes askew and fulfilment is sought in what is not good or only imperfectly so. A person will be discontent and restless, and continue to seek the true good. God offers opportuni-

ty for this basic human desire to get back on track and calls the seeker to God. As suggested by the *Confessions*, God can do this in various ways: by the circumstances of the person's life, by encounters with others, by holy example, and by teaching. At this stage, grace would seem primarily external, outward, and it lies within the person's power to respond properly or improperly to God's call. Predestination is, for all intents and purposes, left to the side, although Augustine does know of a congruous call by God, in which God employs instruments to make the call to a human to turn to God and the true good in a way that is especially effective.

The second stage of Augustine's teaching on grace comes in the second decade the fifth century and is marked by his engagement with Pelagius. An important writing from this period nicely conveys the main aspects of the teaching at this point, as well as the (p. 411) distance between Augustine and Pelagius. In *On the Grace of Christ* (Augustine 1981), Augustine observes that both he and Pelagius make use of a triad to teach what God and the person do in the person's salvation: capacity, volition, and action. By capacity, they are referring to the human will, the will as instrument. By volition, they refer to the use of that capacity, followed by the action that implements what is willed. When a person does good, who deserves the praise for that good willing and good doing? For Pelagius, the praise is to be attributed to both God and the person. To God, because God has made the person human and so endowed with the will as capacity; to God also, because God has given the law and Christ, which each in their own way teach what is involved in good willing and doing. But, the human person especially deserves the praise, because it is up to the person to use the capacity correctly and to follow the law and the teaching and example of Christ. Augustine, too, wants to ascribe praise to both God and to the person. To the person, because it is the person who wills and does. But Augustine detects a much broader contribution of God to the good that the person wills and does. God not only makes the person human and so gives the person the capacity of will, and gives the law and Christ to teach what is involved in good willing and doing (as in Pelagius), God also gives a grace that works inwardly on the person. By this point in his theology, Augustine has attained a much firmer grasp of sin and its consequences. All are born into original sin; all are at odds with God and suffer a certain bondage to sin, an inclination to use the will in an inappropriate, unfruitful way. As bound by sin, the exercise of will, in fact is a misuse of will, that is, it brings more sin and so further bondage and further distance from God. Correct use of the will cannot be regained by the person acting on his or her own. The restoration of correct use is a gift of God, given to those who stand in God's favour. And that grace is inward, removing the bondage of sin, inclining the person to correct willing and doing, and promoting that good willing and doing.

In the second stage of his teaching on grace, Augustine also invokes a teaching on predestination, taken in a causal sense. All are enslaved to sin; in eternity God has ordained that some will be freed from this bondage and moved to good willing and doing. At this stage, predestination is to conversion. Conversion is itself an inner working of God, is itself due to grace and its effect. Once converted, the person will need to use that grace correctly, and if he does, that person will attain eternal life. Granted the more pessimistic assessment of the human person—as enslaved to sin—this affirmation of a predestination

to conversion comes as a relief. Everyone, as bound to sin, deserves by sinning to go to hell; by the grace of God, not all will. The doctrine of predestination can help to cultivate a sense of gratitude to God, for God's mercy.

In the third and final stage of his teaching, articulated in his debates with Christian monks located near Marseilles (the Massilians), Augustine extends the scope of predestination and posits a second operative grace that works interiorly, along with the operative grace of conversion taught in the second stage. Predestination is now seen as predestination to eternal life. Eternal life is a gift, given by God to those who stand in God's special favour. Again, the electing occurs prior to the existence of humans and is eternal, so there is no hint here that someone stands in God's favour because of their personal qualities or own actions. Human good does not occasion election or eternal (p. 412) life; rather all human good follows on election and its carrying out. Election is carried out, implemented, by two operative graces: by conversion the person is moved from the state of sin to the state of grace; by perseverance the person is kept in grace and on the way to God as beatifying end. An inward, operative grace of conversion would have been enough of an answer to the Massilian position. The Massilians had said that the first step on the way to God must be taken by the human and when the human person takes that first step, God will meet the person with the grace that facilitates the rest of the journey. But, for Augustine that would be to ask the impossible of the human person: by sin, one is bound to sin; no one, because of sin, can of himself take the first step to God; the Massilian position is an eternal death sentence. That Augustine goes on to posit a second operative grace, of perseverance, reflects his sense of the permanent status of sin in human existence. The operative grace of conversion moves the person away from sin and towards God, and bursts the chains of sin. But, the convert still lives in a fallen world and is bombarded by temptation, and by temptation not just from without. While grace marks a transformation in the moral character of the person, that transformation is not complete and the person is still subject to the remnants of sin. Temptation comes from within as well. Thus, staying on the path to God requires the further grace of perseverance; God works perseverance in the person, by which the person resists temptation and grows in the good.

In the writings of the third stage, Augustine emphasizes God's working in conversion and in perseverance. That grace is operative and the person is simply moved. But, even in the third stage, Augustine can also think of the human person as agent. Grace can also be cooperative; once in grace, and allowing for perseverance in grace as unmerited gift, the effect of operative grace, the person also makes a contribution to the working out of the person's election. Grace can also be cooperative; God cooperates with the person in grace in willing and doing the good. That willing and doing, exemplified in acts of love, are important for salvation and can be termed meritorious. There is no merit in conversion; there is no merit of perseverance, but eternal life, which is principally a gift, is also reward for the graced good actions of the elect. Even when speaking of merit, however, Augustine is intent on keeping grace front and centre; he insists that the reward for merit is in effect 'grace for grace'. That observation is picked up in the *Catholic Catechism*, evidence of the continued impact of the teaching of the doctor of grace.

The reception of Augustine's final teaching on grace was uneven in the Middle Ages. In the century after Augustine, there was considerable debate about his position vis-à-vis the Massilians. The Second Synod of Orange (529) came out, more or less on the side of Augustine, but the affirmation was not complete. Conversion and perseverance are indeed ascribed to God operating; but the synod is silent on the question of predestination. After the Carolingian period (which range from the late 8th to the mid 9th centuries), the late writings fell out of general theological circulation. The teaching of the Augustine of the first two stages was known, although typically through florilegia, collections of sayings drawn from original writings. Knowledge of the third-stage writings was more haphazard and they returned to a broader theological audience only towards the end of the Middle Ages.

(p. 413) One medieval theologian who did know these late writings, however, was Thomas Aquinas, who rediscovered them in mid-career. His reading of the *Predestination of the Saints* and the *The Gift of Perseverance* would make a profound impact on his own teaching about grace.

Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas's own teaching on grace underwent considerable development between the earliest presentation in the *Commentary on the Sentences* of Peter Lombard, and that in his greatest writing, the *Summa theologiae*. While in the *Commentary*, grace is habitual grace, in the *Summa*, grace is variegated, distinguished into habitual grace and the grace of *auxilium*, each of which is in turn to be considered as operative and as cooperative. The *Summa's* accounts of conversion and of perseverance also differ markedly from what is found in the *Commentary*; the treatment of grace in the *Summa* is firmly anchored in the affirmation of predestination to salvation in a causal sense. Many factors can be adduced to account for these developments, not least Aquinas's recovery, in mid-career, of the later writings of Augustine (Bouillard 1944; Wawrykow 1995: 266–276).

Aquinas devotes several questions in the *Summa theologiae* (*ST*) to grace, covering in turn the need for grace (I–II, q.109), the essence of grace (q.110), the division of grace (q. 111), the cause of grace (q.112), and the effects of grace, both justification, which is the effect of operative grace (q.113), and merit, the effect of cooperative grace (q.114). Aquinas knows the difference between the grace that sanctifies and that given for aiding in the salvation of others (q.111, a.1); the full treatment of the latter is deferred to *ST* II–II, qq.171ff, with the focus in the treatise on grace put on the grace that sanctifies (*gratia gratum faciens*). That grace is caused by God, who calls humans to communion with God, and is given through Christ (*ST* I–II, q.112, a.1, ad 1); Aquinas will pursue the Christological dimensions of grace at length in the Tertia Pars (e.g. *ST* III, qq.7–8).

On the need for grace, *ST* I–II, q.109 nicely sets the tone for the entire treatise. In the ten articles of the question, Aquinas asks about the need for grace for this or that activity. Is grace needed, for example, to know the truth (a.1), or to will and do good (a.2)? Aquinas's particular answers are shaped by certain key distinctions. The first is that between the

natural and the supernatural. Some act is natural to the person if it accords with the nature of the person, as human. An act is supernatural if it lies beyond the native capacities of the person. Thus, given his understanding of the human as knower, Aquinas answers that grace is not needed to know truth, if that truth can be attained through sensation (the starting point of all knowing in the world), imagination, abstraction and judgement. For knowing such truth, one's natural capacities suffice. But, if a truth lies beyond the reach of the senses, then as supernatural, grace would be needed to attain that truth.

In the first article, Aquinas has also introduced the notion of an *auxilium*, required for human acting. The contribution of *auxilium* is asserted here on metaphysical grounds. (p. 414) What is in potency to act, does not reduce itself to act, but is reduced to act by something that is already in act. That is God, who is fully and eternally actual. God moves humans to their act. At this point in the analysis, *auxilium* can be termed merely natural: in knowing the truth that originates in the senses, God moves the human, in potential to such knowing, to act. As the question proceeds, an *auxilium* that is grace will be introduced and the reasons for positing the grace of *auxilium* will be both metaphysical, as here, and moral, taking into consideration the problem of sin.

Having introduced his first distinction between the natural and the supernatural, and having lined up grace with the supernatural, Aquinas immediately (in *ST* I–II, q.109, a.2) nuances the picture, introducing two further distinctions. The first takes account of sin, of human existence after the fall. Is grace needed to will and do good? If the good is natural to the person as human, there was no need for grace prior to the fall; human capacity would suffice for such willing and doing, as applied to act by *auxilium*. But, the human person as originally created was ordained to eternal life and that lies beyond the natural powers of the human. At this point, Aquinas introduces the third of his key distinctions. For that good, grace is required, both habitual grace and a different grace, the grace of *auxilium*. Habitual grace and the virtues infused with it, enhances and extends the powers of the human to the supernatural level, making possible actions that are raised in dignity and oriented to God as beatifying end. And, the person perfected by habitual grace and the infused virtues, is moved to act by *auxilium*, by *auxilia* that are themselves graces.

After the fall, this need for grace as elevating and orienting to God as beatifying end remains, but an additional reason is introduced. Sin affects the natural powers of the person. The lower self enters into conflict with the higher self, seeking its own limited goods and the entire person is taken out of subordination to God. Thus, even with regards to the natural good, after the fall humans need grace for willing and doing the good in keeping with human nature. As with the supernatural good, so too with the natural good that both Aquinas's graces required: habitual grace provides for a restoration of the self within the human and in relation to God, so that by grace more of the natural good can be willed and done; and God moves the person to willing and doing the natural good by the grace that is *auxilium*. In sum, Aquinas has two graces, habitual and *auxilium*, and each of these has two main functions, to elevate and to heal.

In *ST* I–II, q.111, a.2, c, Aquinas completes the enumeration of grace by distinguishing each of these graces into operative and cooperative. Aquinas defines 'operative' and 'cooperative' as used of these two graces. Viewed has habitual, 'operative' refers to being: habitual grace provides new being, by making its recipient pleasing to God and orienting the person to God as beatifying end. 'Cooperative' habitual grace is concerned with operation: by this grace, one is inclined to and disposed towards acts that bring one closer to God as beatifying end. The greater part of the corpus of this article is concerned with the grace of *auxilium*. When used of *auxilium*, 'operative' involves God moving the mind and the mind is simply moved. Conversion is given as the great example of operative *auxilium*: conversion away from sin and towards God as beatifying end is worked by God and the person is simply moved. From the discussion elsewhere in the (p. 415) treatise (*ST* I–II, q. 109, aa.8–10), it is possible to acknowledge another example of operative *auxilium*: perseverance in grace. As used of *auxilium*, 'cooperative' involves God moving the will but in such a way that the will also moves itself. Although it is a matter of some scholarly debate, it is likely that Aquinas has in mind here not only external action, but the choice of means. By operative *auxilia*, God provides good intention, willing the end of the act. God simply moves the person to good intention. By cooperative *auxilium*, God moves the person such that the person also moves himself, pondering how to reach the intended end and developing and adopting a strategy for reaching the end, and then performing the act that leads to that end. The discussion here will be continued in qq.113–114. In the first, the effect of operative grace that is justification is explored in depth; in q.114, the topic is merit, effect of cooperative grace. For meriting, the person must be active and is by God's grace.

The *Summa's* treatise on grace makes ample use of the journey motif. Life in this world is distinguished into the state of grace, preceded by the state of non-grace, of sin. Life in this world is—or should be—ordered to life in the next, to coming into the immediate presence of God and knowing and loving God directly. What is done in this life prepares for that direct encounter and readies the person—who by God's grace knows and loves correctly now—for the beatific vision. In several of the questions in the treatise, Aquinas reflects on conversion, the movement into the state of grace. That in *ST* I–II, q.112, aa.2–3, in keeping with what is asserted in q.109, a.6, is especially noteworthy, making use of the analysis offered in q.111, 2c. Lying behind the formulation in q.112, aa.2–3 is a slogan much employed in medieval discussions of grace from the twelfth century on: *facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam* ('to someone doing his best, God gives grace'). In the *Commentary on the Sentences* of Peter Lombard, Aquinas had offered a rather straightforward interpretation of the slogan, putting the stress on human initiative in the salvific process (Wawrykow 1995: 84). God gives habitual grace to someone who tries to reform and to show God one's own seriousness about getting right with God. Provided someone takes that first step towards God, God will respond, infusing the habitual grace needed for supernaturally pleasing acts. By the *Summa*, Aquinas has abandoned that account of conversion. It is not the person who takes the first step; rather, God moves the person away from sin and towards God as beatifying end, doing so by operative *auxilium*. In conversion the person is simply moved. Does God have to give grace to someone who

has turned to God? For Aquinas, there are two ways at looking at this. If one looks at the person, who is a creature, God stands under no obligation to give that person habitual grace. To use a saying that will come into favour in the next century, especially among theologians who play up divine willing and transcendence, nothing created can necessitate God. God could ignore what the person does. But in converting the person is moved and it is God who does the moving. Thus, when looked at from this angle, there is a sort of necessity between the doing in the person and the granting of habitual grace as the term of conversion. For God does nothing idly and since it is God who moves the person away from sin and towards God as beatifying end, God will give habitual grace to the one who is so prepared. Through this invocation of operative *auxilium*, which expresses God's saving will, Aquinas has in effect stood the *facienti quod in* *(p. 416)* *se est* on its head: initiative lies not with the person, but with God and God's will for that person.

As the term of conversion, habitual grace is infused along with the theological virtues. Habitual grace is both operative and cooperative, providing new being, making the person pleasing to God, and inclining that person to acts pleasing to God. Habitual grace is single; a person will not receive other habitual graces. *Auxilium*, however, is several. There is the operative *auxilium* that accounts for conversion and there are the *auxilia* involved in good human willing and doing. Operative *auxilium* provides for good intention, cooperative for choice of the means and action; there will be as many *auxilia* for the person in the state of grace as there are complete human acts that are good and leading towards God as beatifying end. The affirmation of *auxilia* reflects Aquinas's conviction about the continued presence of God in the life of the individual. God is engaged in the moral and spiritual progress of those who have been called to eternal life.

The *Summa's* teaching about grace is anchored in the teaching about predestination found in the Prima Pars: grace and graced human acts stand as effect to the cause that is God's predestining will (*ST* I, q.23, a.5, c). In this presentation of predestination, Aquinas insists on the role of God's love. For Aquinas, love is to will good with respect to another. In *ST* I, q.20, he niftily distinguishes between God's loving and that of humans. Human willing of the good is elicited by a good that already exists or appears to exist. Human loving does not cause that good. God's love, however, is causal: it is in God loving that there is good. Aquinas secures the point by noting in what sense God can be said to love the better more (*ST* I, q.20, a.4). What is better, has more good, has received from God more of the good. Aquinas will trade on this understanding in discussing creation: that there are different levels of being, each with its own nature and so of differing capacity, is due to God's will, which communicates more good to some (that is, higher levels of being), than to others (i.e. God has communicated more good to the squirrel than to a plant). Aquinas makes good use of this teaching in presenting predestination in a causal sense. Does God love all humans? Yes, for it is better to exist than to not exist and better to exist as human than as a lower creature with less capacity. Does God love all human equally? Rather, God has willed more good to some human beings, in that prior to their actual existence, God has ordained some to the superlative good of eternal life. That someone makes it to heaven is due to God's causal love, to God's intention to communicate such good to some rational creatures. In view of that predestining, God provides to such ratio-

nal creatures the grace that is needed to attain to the end of eternal life; in the treatise on grace in the Prima Secundae, Aquinas spells out what is entailed in this grace that carries out predestination.

Whatever good there is in the person is due to God's love. Holiness does not occasion election, but follows on it. For Aquinas, however, this insistence does not prevent talk about merit in a meaningful sense. Aquinas initiates the discussion of the role of merit in *ST* I, q.23, a.5, in the context of his main presentation of predestination. Merits are not the cause of election, but follow on election. The merit that Aquinas affirms is the merit of the elect. And, they can 'merit' because of God's willing of good to them (grace) and because of an ordination that is part of predestination: God has ordained that one part of the salvific process is meritorious of another. There is merit only in the state of grace (p. 417) and so one who lacks grace, cannot merit. But once in the state of grace, the person by his graced acts can, by the divine ordination that grounds merit, merit another part, eternal life. And so eternal life is both gift (and principally so) but reward as well; in the working out of the salvation of a person, the goods of God's mercy and justice are thus displayed. In the Prima Secundae, Aquinas continues the discussion of merit, there as the culmination of the treatise on grace. In *ST* I–II, 114, Aquinas is as intent on specifying what cannot be merited (grace in the first place/conversion; perseverance in grace) as what can be (more habitual grace and the end of the journey, heaven, which is also, radically, gift).

An important inspiration for the *Summa's* discussions of predestination, grace, and merit, is the late teaching of St Augustine. Significant Augustinian elements are taken up into Aquinas's presentation, although Aquinas is more expansive on select points (not least the role of merit in a teaching that plays up predestination and God's intimate involvement by grace in human acting). Other medieval theologians could approach questions of grace and freedom differently while also thinking that they too avoided the error of Pelagius. Especially important in the later Middle Ages is the thought of William Ockham and his followers (Ockham 1983; Dettloff 1963; Hamm 1977; Oberman 1981, ch. 3). Compared to the late Aquinas, the main points of this teaching can be stated as follows: predestination is not affirmed in causal terms. Rather, predestination is a matter of (fore-)knowing: God knows what a person does and responds accordingly. The person who acts appropriately is rewarded; the one who sins is punished. Secondly, the *facienti quod in se est* does double duty, affirmed of conversion and of staying and prospering in the state of grace. When a person shows a seriousness about her relationship to God and vows to change her ways, God gives grace; and when that person with grace continues to show religious seriousness, God gives heaven as a reward. And, third, while there is talk of sin and its effects, what seems especially in view in describing human–God relations is the ontological gap, the distance between God the Creator and end, and humans who are creatures. Considered in itself, what a creature does is of little account and need not make an impression on God. But for Ockhamists, God has committed Godself to a course of action: when a person who lacks grace does what is good and takes the first step to God, God has promised to give grace, and will give grace. God keeps God's promises and so grace is given to the one prepared for grace, regardless of the ontological gap. There

is an additional promise that governs the person in grace: when that person with habitual grace does what he can, God will keep God's promise to God and reward that person accordingly. In this analysis, the gratuity of salvation is maintained. God doesn't have to enter into such a contract; that God does so, is due to God's initiative and love.

Rahner and Liberation Theology

The teaching about grace more recently advanced by Karl Rahner (1904-84) has proven to be highly influential. Worked out in critique of the 'manual theology' of grace that was (p. 418) prevalent in the early twentieth century, Rahner drew on the earlier (patristic, medieval) Catholic tradition on grace while introducing his own distinctive stresses and insights. His goal in this teaching is ultimately pastoral: to make Catholic teaching more meaningful and accessible to modern people. To this end, Rahner employs the scholastic distinction between uncreated and created grace (Rahner 1961b). 'Created grace' refers to the effects of God's love for humans, in their justification and sanctification by endowing them with habitual grace. 'Uncreated grace' refers to God himself, to the God who loves humans and who is active in their lives. For Rahner, the manualists had put the emphasis on the created effect. This, in his estimation, is to shift the focus to what is secondary. For his part, Rahner is throughout attentive to the immediate presence and activity of the triune God in the lives of humans. That—uncreated grace—is the grace that is pre-eminent, and which he wishes in particular to proclaim. In championing uncreated grace, Rahner shows the deep importance of God's activity for human flourishing; it is by God that a human is able to grow and act and thrive in a genuinely human way.

Rahner has a dynamic view of the human self and of human possibilities, a position that is secured through transcendental analysis, identification of the fundamental structures of human existence that account for the distinctiveness of the human and render possible and meaningful particular activities in the world (Rahner 1997). To be human means to desire, to seek the truth, and to know the good. It is to be open to truth and to have responsibility for its pursuit. To the extent that one knows what is true and what is genuinely good, the more one grows into one's personhood, lives out of the nature, and becomes what one might be as human. In this view of the human there is already an acknowledgement of the role of God: it is God who creates, establishes the nature in its fundamental openness and orientation to completion in knowing and loving; it is God who, as ultimate Truth and Good, is the end of human seeking and desiring (whether or not this is acknowledged).

But God's role is more extensive and more intimate. God is not merely the Truth beyond and behind all truth, the horizon of all human seeking for truth. God is personal—indeed, tri-personal—and reaches out to humans. God does this freely and in love. God discloses God to humans, communicates God to humans, prompting by God's presence to them to seek what is true, and to love what is genuinely good to realize their nature. At the same time, by this self-communicative presence, God provides to humans the capacity to respond to this prompting. In this regard, Rahner refers to the 'supernatural existential'. As

'supernatural', it provides a basic capacity for what lies beyond the nature, that is, for opting for God himself. As 'existential', it is a fundamental feature of human existence, of all human beings. The supernatural existential makes possible the correct response to God's leading through God's presence. It does not necessitate that correct response; that remains with the person. But when a person does opt for God, to live out of the nature, and to be and become what a human can be, God has played a significant role.

God's self-giving is indeed to all, to every person (Rahner 1997:127). There is no place in this account of divine–human interaction for a predestination construed in a causal sense by God of only some people to eternal life. Rather, God is present to all and at all (p. 419) times in human history, and God thus gives all the opportunity to choose for God and to live out of that calling in their discrete (categorical) acts in the world. Rahner is offering here his interpretation of the biblical (1 Tim. 2:4) claim, that 'God wills the salvation of all'. This insistence on the universality of uncreated grace meshes nicely with Rahner's teaching about the 'anonymous Christian'. Whenever a person (every person, whether an explicit disciple of Christ or not) acts authentically, in knowing and loving as one should and as perfective of the self, God's gracious involvement is presupposed.

In presenting his ideas about uncreated grace, Rahner draws a parallel between what Aquinas had affirmed of the beatific vision and God's grace (Rahner 1997: 118). For Aquinas, in the vision that is the culmination of the journey God acts as the form of the viewer: God is united to the *comprehensor* as the form by which the essence of God is seen and grasped. No created form would suffice for this direct and total vision of God. For Rahner, the same is so in the graced life of the individual in this world and prior to reaching the end of life in the beatific vision. As uncreated grace, God acts as a sort of form of the human agent, becoming a constitutive element of the human. Rahner's extension of Aquinas's teaching about the vision to grace itself and life in this world underscores in a quite striking way God's intimate involvement in the life of the human, while also affirming that it is the human to whom God is present, who wills, and does, and knows.

Grace is in an obvious way elevating. By grace, one opts for God as end and lives out of that decision, in the particular decisions and acts of life in the world. Through those acts, one moves closer to God as to beatifying end and is readied for the culmination of the journey in the direct vision of God, the immediate grasping and loving of the ultimate Truth and Good. But grace is healing and redemptive as well (Rahner 1997: 116ff.). Sin has been and remains a problem. There is much that calls the human away from God and from genuine flourishing. While God gives all the opportunity to choose God and to act accordingly, not all accept God's offer; some reject that offer and stay within themselves and for themselves. Even when the fundamental option for God has been made, the temptation remains to reject God, to replace God with other goods that are limited, partial, and sometimes illusory. In his account of the human condition, Rahner offers a fairly robust teaching about original sin and its effects, and sin as itself a feature of human existence. By sin, one stays self-enclosed, resists those movements made possible by God that would allow for self-transcendence, and through correct relationship to God, real fulfil-

ment. All humans stand guilty before God, for the original and personal rejections of God's saving presence. Yet, while sin is real, it is not equal in strength to uncreated grace and grace can overcome it; but that involves the free acceptance of God in grace, rejection of sin, and acceptance of God's word of forgiveness by the person as called by God, and acting in accord with this fundamental orientation to God.

The universality of grace and of God's gracious presence to all might seem to put into question the centrality and significance of Jesus Christ. Rahner rejects the charge (1997: 157ff.). For him, God's activity in the world and will for salvation is ordered to Jesus Christ and God's love is most fully expressed in Jesus. Jesus shows what it means to be authentically and fully human, to live for God, and in every action and passion to be for God. (p. 420) Jesus did not waver from his fidelity and obedience to God. In Jesus, at the same time, there is a full manifestation of God. God is present and active in Jesus and fully identifies with him—to the point of a union that is truly hypostatic. In Jesus, God and man are one. By Jesus, God is intimately and concretely present to those whose salvation God wills. Jesus is himself grace, God's offer in love of forgiveness (to sinful people who stand guilty, because of their wavering and lapses) before God, and of elevation to new life. The call in Christ does not necessitate its response, but the apt response to God in Christ is faith, hope, and charity, and so to emulate Jesus in the fundamental choice for God and acting in that light.

Liberation theology displays other significant developments (see also the chapter by Goizueta, this volume). The sources of liberation theology are multiple, not least the Scriptures. But there are several points of contact with Rahner and particular liberation theologians may see themselves in a creative dialogue with Rahner. As in Rahner, uncreated grace is to the fore and lesser attention is given to created grace. As in Rahner, grace is the complement of an anthropology, and human acting at its most authentic is seen in the context of God's presence and activity in the world. That acting is also God's and God's activity is the presupposition for human acting. As in Rahner, grace as God's love is healing as well as elevating (Segundo 1973: 63).

Now, Rahner knows that humans are social beings, who live in community, and who express their fidelity to God through their love of neighbour. He supplements his transcendental analysis with considerations of the categorical, with the actual knowing and loving of God in and through the knowing and loving that might mark life in this world. But in Rahner, the concern would seem to be primarily with the individual (as is the case with much of the preceding Catholic tradition); it is the transcendental analysis that would seem to stand to the fore, with the categorical supplementing, confirming, and illustrating what is available through an account of a human as free and responsible subject who is in relationship to God. In liberation theology, the individual is not discounted, but the social dimensions of human life are given their proper due. Without disputing the value of transcendental analysis, the focus is resolutely on life as actually lived and the ways in which human beings, individually and collectively, are shaped by history and might shape it.

And so in considering grace and sin, a double claim is offered. Sin is both personal and communal, corporate, to be ascribed to groups of people, to communities, and to their institutions. There are societal structures that are sinful, which privilege some at the expense of others and which promote injustice rather than equality. Correspondingly, the grace that enters into history, enters the life of the individual, to be sure, but has a corporate character as well (Comblin 1993: 525). A human is a human-in-community. The grace that brings forgiveness and heals also liberates, empowering human beings who work together in the service of God in the implementation of God's will in history.

Grace helps to account for the activism promoted in liberation theology. Grace is gift. It is also vocation (Comblin 1993: 526). The world stands at odds with God, with God's intention for history, for respect for the dignity of all human beings, and equality and justice for all. Humans in their relations are marked by sin and guilt, by the privileging of the few at the expense of the many, by situations and structures that promote injustice, (p. 421) and which deny to too many their dignity as beings made by and for God. The kingdom that Jesus proclaimed is future, but it is now being implemented by God and by those who accept God's grace of forgiveness and acceptance, which at the same time is power. Grace is freedom, the power to liberate from sin and guilt and for God and the kingdom. There is no easy optimism here. The transformation wrought by grace is not complete in the individual and certainly not in society and its structures (Segundo 1973: 139). But by grace, Christ's disciples can and will work with God in challenging sin and working for justice, out of the love that God's love for humans in Christ engenders.

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Life and Death

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This chapter places Catholic teaching on questions of life and death against the background of a Catholic vision of salvation history, emphasizing that Catholics see no necessary opposition between Christian faith and progress in scientific understanding of the creation. The chapter then considers questions concerning abortion, contraception, and techniques for artificial reproduction. The second half of the chapter focuses on questions concerning death. Catholic teaching views human life in this world as finite, and thus sees death as intrinsic to the current human condition. After considering Catholic teaching on euthanasia, the chapter considers Catholic discussion of war, the death penalty, and care for the environment.

Keywords: life, death, abortion, contraception, euthanasia, war, death penalty, environment

LIFE and death questions, at best, come across as perplexing, and at worst, seem punitive and unloving. How can the Church ask a single teenage woman who has been raped to carry her child full term? Why should a family whose loved one has been murdered suffer with the knowledge that the killer remains alive, behind bars? Why doesn't the Church approve of in-vitro fertilization, when it helps infertile couples achieve pregnancy? After all, doesn't the Church *want* people to have children? Such questions come to the forefront of discussions about life and death, hitting people exactly at raw, vulnerable, and painful junctures that can create barriers for peoples' full participation in the life of the Church.

In addition, people tend to perceive life and death issues as a cause for division in the Church. Life-and-death issues, typically seen as relating to abortion, contraception, and stem-cell research, alongside euthanasia and end-of-life questions, seem opposed to what are commonly known as social-justice issues such as fair wages, and seeking alleviation of poverty. Many Western Catholics find themselves supporting the Church's teaching about social-justice issues, but not life-and-death issues, often because its stance on social justice seems loving, while its stance on life-and-death questions seems distinctly unloving (see e.g. Woodhead 2013). Those Catholics who see themselves primarily as pro-life

Catholics often see themselves at odds with social-justice Catholics, and both groups can end up being dismissive of each other. Christian views on life and death can seem unloving because they also seem unrealistic, not taking into account the particularities of peoples' lives. By contrast, the Church's views on fair wages and ending poverty appear quite realistic in the sense that at least Christians are responding directly to peoples' complex needs, even if poverty itself is never wholly eradicated.

I used to see Catholic teaching about life-and-death questions as unrealistic. I grew up in a pro-choice family, where the catchphrase was: 'I wouldn't have an abortion, but I wouldn't want to impose that choice on someone else'. It was that focus on enabling peoples' choices about difficult situations that made it seem more realistic, more attentive to peoples' needs. My views began to change when, as a teenager, I read a newspaper story of a baby who had died because she was suffocated with a plastic bag. She had been (p. 424) about twenty-eight weeks' gestation. The journalist suggested that the baby would have died anyway, because twenty-eight weeks was usually too small to survive outside the womb; still the mother (also a teenager) would be charged with murder, despite the fact that had she aborted the baby only a few days earlier, it would not have been murder but perfectly legal in that area of the United States.

My questions were not simply due to the incongruency: how easy a shift it was between legality and murder in the space of just a few days, especially when there were not clear distinctions between the motivations involved in the suffocation case and the motivations women describe in having late-term abortions. My questions were also directly related to my own life, for I was born at twenty-seven and a half weeks' gestation, just under one kilo at birth. Some of the reasons women consider abortion to begin with—such as disabilities and hospitalizations and special education among them—were all present at my own birth and in the early years of life. I have a profound hearing loss as a result of that birth, among other things, and had years of speech therapy and medical tests.

It was reflection on both my own story and the wider cultural context surrounding abortion and other life/death issues that caused me to begin questioning the view I had learned growing up. It was also thus that I began thinking about the ways we perceive a line between social-justice issues and life issues. To what extent were these quite so distinct? Social justice for women and their children and other vulnerable people such as those who are disabled seemed quite in line with teachings about life issues.

Numerous theologians and bishops have pointed out that there can be no true divide. Some include the death penalty, war, and questions about animal cruelty and environmental care among the range of life-and-death issues, though all of these might be considered as social-justice issues too. Indeed, John Paul II's 1995 encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (Gospel of Life) discusses some of the numerous ways human life is threatened:

> And how can we fail to consider the violence against life done to millions of human beings, especially children, who are forced into poverty, malnutrition and hunger because of an unjust distribution of resources between peoples and between social classes? And what of the violence inherent not only in wars as such but in the

> scandalous arms trade, which spawns the many armed conflicts which stain our world with blood? What of the spreading of death caused by reckless tampering with the world's ecological balance, by the criminal spread of drugs, or by the promotion of certain kinds of sexual activity which, besides being morally unacceptable, also involve grave risks to life?
>
> (*Evangelium vitae* 10).

While the encyclical goes on primarily to discuss the beginning (abortion) and end of human life (euthanasia) and the ways in which our 'culture of death' promotes a vision of human beings that makes abortion and euthanasia acceptable, John Paul II also sees these questions as only one part of the Church's teachings on human life (see *Evangelium vitae* 27).

(p. 425) This chapter on life and death therefore discusses questions about the beginnings and endings of life in conjunction with questions about war, the death penalty, and concern for the environment. In order to show how all of these questions are related in what Joseph Cardinal Bernardin named the 'seamless garment' (Bernardin 1983), I first discuss why life is so important in Catholic thought. Then I discuss each of the main issues in turn, at each point addressing one or two of the tough questions that make Catholic teaching on life and death issues seem so unrealistic and at times cruel or anti-human. By the chapter's end, I hope to have shown that Church teaching about poverty and other social justice questions cannot be separated from teaching about abortion and other life-and-death questions and to have made a case for why Catholic teaching isn't meant to be cruel, especially when it is understood in relation to these social justice issues.

The Importance of Salvation History

To speak about salvation history is to speak about God's creation of the universe and all that is in it, the world's redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and parousia, which names the end of time when God will be all in all. If we do not meditate on creation, redemption, and parousia, as understood in Scripture, then it is impossible to understand Church teaching about life-and-death issues such as abortion, the death penalty, and euthanasia.

Science, Religion, and Creation

In Western culture, discussion of salvation history and especially creation can seem disjointed, even mythical, compared to the scientific truths that most of our contemporary discourse presumes. Life-and-death issues are caught up, inevitably, in contemporary debates about science and religion because of their link to contemporary medical practice and the ways medicine is linked to scientific and technological discovery.

Catholics do not see the problems with reflecting on both creation and evolution because both scientific inquiry and reflection on Scripture are part of the same human thirst and

quest for knowledge. The particular debate about creation versus evolution has pitted creation stories in Scripture (which seem mythical and unrealistic) against scientific accounts (which seem evidential from our experience and environment). Popularly, people have sided with scientific accounts over religion. This has been detrimental to understanding and appreciating the gift of human life from a Catholic point of view, particularly since for Catholics there is no true war between science and religion. Scientific inquiry involves humans' plumbing the depths of the mysteries that exist in our world; those mysteries do not contradict who God is nor the unique and loving relationship that exists between God and humanity.

(p. 426) Accordingly, theologians and scientists alike have protested against this popularized war between science and religion. Theologians such as Herbert McCabe have noted that science and religion speak about utterly distinctive things. Science examines the stuff of our universe; God, on the other hand, as Christians have traditionally understood God, is not part of the stuff of the universe since God is not an object within our universe (McCabe 1987, ch. 1 and 2). Scientists such as biologist David Sloan Wilson (a self-proclaimed atheist) argue likewise against the too-simplistic view that religion is the evil and unscientific entity that Richard Dawkins and similarly minded New Atheists proclaim (Wilson 2003). Science is imprecise and like religion, it continually seeks answers. Catholic tradition is not ultimately afraid of genuine seeking after truth, because we believe that a search for truth is ultimately a search for God.

Catholics also read and understand Scripture more broadly than popular discussion of Scripture in the science/religion debates often indicates. Christianity has a long tradition of reading Scripture in terms of its literal meaning (that is, the way the words go), as well as in allegorical and figurative meanings. Because God is not one of the many created objects in our universe, we always find ourselves running up against the incomprehensible whenever we discuss history in relation to God. So, we can understand creation as true while not needing to make scriptural history historically factual and verifiable from human understanding, since the earth is not created on the basis of our mere human understanding. The creation accounts in Genesis therefore tell us something about ourselves that we would *not* otherwise know if we were only looking to ourselves and to the natural world to understand the origins of the universe.

A Catholic vision of creation is grounded in several texts from the Book of Genesis. In the first chapter, we read:

> Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth'.
>
> So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

> God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’
>
> (Gen. 1:26–28).

From this account of creation, we learn that humans have the particular gift of being created in God’s image, that humans are blessed, and that we have certain responsibilities in relation to God’s gift of the earth. All of life is a gracious and enormous gift given to us by God, and moreover, we humans bear the particularity of being created in God’s own image. No one of us is alive without encountering these gifts (1 Cor. 15:28).

What does it mean to be made in the image of God? Some have said that it is our reason that makes us in the image of God; some say it is our freedom and our ability to have choices. Some suggest it is our bodies—male and female—and their incumbent (p. 427) sexuality, that make us in God’s own image. The arguments about what it means to be made in the image of God lead us to remember that ultimately, this point is a mystery, and we do not know fully what it means to be made in God’s image, any more than we really understand God.

That mystery, however, is part of what makes Catholics most concerned to protect all human life. Questions that non-Christians might ask about a person’s potential enjoyment of life, especially based on whether or not the person has rational thought, is *not* a key part of Catholic arguments. That is, aborting a foetus with apparent brain damage or physical disability is still to abort someone who is made in the image of God.

Fall, Redemption, and Parousia

The events of the fall, redemption, and parousia teach us that we are unconditionally loved, despite and even because of physical, mental, or other impairments. Such a view of humanity comes not only from being made in the image of God, but also from our awareness of our own sinfulness, which is what the fall of Adam and Eve suggests to us.

What God offers to us in the redemption of Jesus Christ, despite our sin, is the recognition that we are loved, really loved, despite all of our evil *and* good deeds. The teachings about not aborting children, or about just war, or the death penalty, are teachings that seek above all to be formed in this way of unconditional love—to presume, always, that God seeks a loving relationship with us and has offered us the gift of life. We are free to respond to that gift of life or not, but Catholic teaching presupposes that Christians will always opt for giving the benefit of the doubt to life and love as we understand life and love to be revealed in Jesus Christ.

More than that, as the Apostle Paul names in his letter to the Ephesians, Jesus Christ is ‘our peace’ who makes us one (Eph. 2:14). The peace that Jesus offers to us is part of why his coming into the world is our redemption. Catholic teaching on life-and-death issues is a witness to Christ’s peace; it asks us to take stock of myriad ways in which we might be

acting violently—not only on prominent issues such as abortion and euthanasia, but also in relation to war and even everyday things such as the kind of food we eat.

Even in very dark moments in history, Christians have witnessed to a belief that death is not the end, and that what appears as darkness will be made as bright as day. Jesus is like daylight: unstoppable. The event of Jesus' return, when God will be all in all. is named the "parousia." This belief that Jesus is unstoppable no matter what we do means that while we value life, we do not worship life, but rather God who gives us that life. Death is therefore not to be avoided at all costs.

In relation to Catholic teaching about life and death, we embrace the goodness of human life by saying decisively that we cannot seek to destroy human life at its beginning or its end. Yet we also do not seek to prolong it or engineer it to the point that desire for life overtakes desire for God. These doctrinal points help illuminate specific questions and issues related to life-and-death questions that I discuss below.

(p. 428) Beginning of Life Questions

Abortion

One of the most-discussed life/death questions, abortion is likely to be a person's first encounter with the moral questions surrounding life and death. Church teaching in relation to abortion is actually strikingly simple: do not do anything that would directly kill a child in the womb. Christians have long held a strong position about the need to protect unborn life; both abortion and infanticide are prohibited in one of the earliest Church catechisms, *The Didache*, which admonishes: '[Y]ou shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill that which is born' (*Didache* 2).

Arguments about abortion have tended along two main strands. One is the question of what counts as human life, and another is the question of how we are to understand the meaning and quality of that life at its beginnings. Yet, as I shall show below, how we react to life's beginnings affects how we think about life's middle and end as well.

We can partially understand the first question, what counts as human life, by turning to the work of one famous pro-choice advocate, Judith Jarvis Thomson. She argues that the foetus is merely a parasite on its mother, making use of a woman's circulatory and pulmonary systems as its own (Thomson 1971; The terminology of 'parasite' is introduced in Meilaender 1987). The mother should therefore have a choice for whether to get rid of the parasite or not, since having a parasite is not a normal part of being human. Thomson provides a good example of a dominant, non-Catholic strand of thinking about life, which is that what it means to be alive and have a good life is to be an individual who has the freedom to pursue his or her desires without any coercion from others, including parasites.

The second question, about the quality of life at its beginnings, is seen in a recent essay. Judy Nicastro, writing for the *New York Times*, suggests: 'I believe that parenthood begins before conception, at the moment you decide you want a child and are ready and able to create a safe and loving home for him or her' (Nicastro 2013). Nicastro finds herself pregnant with twins, but then describes the heart-wrenching reality of learning that one of the twins she is carrying has a heart defect. She and her husband had decided that they wanted to do whatever they could for the baby, if it was 'fixable' and if the baby could have a good quality of life. Most parents would recognize their sentiments in these words: they, too, want to 'fix' their childrens' problems, to give their children a good quality of life, to offer a safe and loving home.

In both of these views, we choose those parts of history that we find most meaningful for us, just as we choose only those things that are most meaningful for us. We decide when our own beginnings and endings are, without reference to the other people who have helped us to live to the point when we exist, and we decide when others' beginnings and endings are as well, based on our own sense of well-being.

(p. 429) By contrast, Catholic teaching about life and death is utterly realistic in the sense that the Church sees that even things such as a good quality of life, and a safe and loving home cannot finally be guaranteed. The Church's view of the beginning and end of life are seamlessly connected to its view about the middle of life, too. A Catholic pro-life position presumes only that life is a gift, not that life won't be difficult to bear at times. As one commenter on the Nicastro article notes:

> We cannot foresee or manage every outcome. The healthy baby is hit by a car and becomes the brain-damaged child. The child with leukemia is healed. Some of it is in our power to affect; most of it is not. Children fall into the deep end. What looks like a cold becomes fatal meningitis. The 'desperately wanted' child grows up to be an alcoholic or a meth addict or a murderer. The quality of life, promising at the start, turns bitter and life-denying. And all children, desperately wanted or wanted not at all, will die. Just like every adult; just like every human being. We all have problems that will turn out not to be 'fixable'. So it's that 'if' that breaks your heart
>
> (Musick 2013).

In a world of doubts and in the face of mystery, Catholic teaching errs on the side of offering life and love despite all those doubts, and even because of those doubts.

Still, how is a person to reconcile the injunction against abortion with concerns for women who raise those babies? At a lecture I once delivered, a woman asked: 'So if all of this is about love, I have difficulty reconciling the Church's teachings against abortion, contraception, and in-vitro fertilization with loving others'. She could see that we love embryos, but where was justice for the women whose lives would be disrupted, who

might find themselves unable to hold a job, because they now had a baby to care for? Where was the Church in the midst of these women's struggles?

She was exactly right to ask that question, for it highlights both where the Church often fails in teaching about abortion and also why many Catholics perceive a divide between political/economic issues, and life-and-death issues. It looks like women and babies have to be pitted against each other. Yet, really to uphold Catholic teaching on life and death means also to uphold Catholic teaching on economic and political justice. Women's lives should be viewed as much as a gift as that of an unborn baby, and promoting and protecting women's abilities to care for their children are integral to a full account of life-and-death issues. Enabling completion of education, just wages for women, and good parental leave policies become just a few of the concerns Catholics need take up in relation to abortion. Some Catholics have advocated on behalf of these issues, as well as sponsored crisis pregnancy centres aimed at providing pregnant women with baby clothes and diapers, aids for finding jobs and childcare, and monetary assistance.

Women's health also arises as a chief question when thinking about abortion. It is important to understand that for all that 'do not commit abortion' seems to be the Church's simple command, the Church's teachings about abortion contain an important distinction. Moral theologian Therese Lysaught observes: 'Not all interventions that result in (p. 430) the death of the fetus qualify as abortions' (Lysaught 2010). She uses Pope Pius XII's 'Address to Associations of Large Families' to show this:

> The reason is that if, for example, the safety of the future mother, independently of her state of pregnancy, might call for an urgent surgical operation, or any other therapeutic application, which would have as an accessory consequence, in no way desired or intended, but inevitable, the death of the fetus, such an act could not be called a direct attempt on the innocent life. In these conditions the operations can be lawful, as can other similar medical interventions, provided that it be a matter of great importance, such as life, and that it is not possible to postpone it till the birth of the child, or to have recourse to any other efficacious remedy
>
> (Rhonheimer 2009: 38).

One of the most common examples of this kind of situation in healthcare is treatment of ectopic pregnancies, where an embryo has implanted in the fallopian tubes (or sometimes in other locations) and not in the uterus. When this occurs, the fallopian tube becomes abnormal and damaged, likely to lead to internal rupture and death for the woman. Most theologians agree that removal of the portion of the abnormal fallopian tube, even though it contains the embryo as well, is not a directly intended abortion because the intent is to remove a damaged part of the woman's body that causes death, rather than to kill the embryo itself. The good (a woman's life is saved even though the baby's is not) is at least equivalent to the evil of the alternative (both mother and baby die). This is an instance where many theologians make use of the principle of double effect. Cases where the

mother's and baby's lives are at stake are complicated and require much more attention to detail than can be discussed here (see Ashley, deBlois, and O'Rourke 2006).

The Church's teaching against abortion thus needs to be seen alongside the Church's concerns about a wide range of other issues, including economic justice and providing good healthcare.

Contraception

Contraception is a life-and-death issue for Catholics insofar as the teaching about contraception hinges on the sense that using artificial contraception explicitly acts against the gift of life. That gift of life is celebrated through lovemaking in at least two ways: one is the unity that the couple experiences, and the other is the new life that *can* but may not necessarily occur. And thus this teaching on contraception is inseparable from a Catholic vision of marriage. Pope Paul VI's 1968 document on contraception, *Humanae vitae*, states: the fundamental nature of the marriage act, while uniting husband and wife in the closest intimacy, also renders them capable of generating new life' (*Humanae vitae* 9 and 11) At the heart of the teaching is the belief that the new life children bring is to be welcomed, however they come to us, especially because at its best, sex represents great love.

(p. 431) That said, Catholic teaching does not advocate that parents welcome as many children as possible. Rather it advocates that a couple be prudent in having children, through the use of natural family-planning methods. *Humanae vitae* notes:

> With regard to physical, economic, psychological, and social conditions, responsible parenthood is exercised by those who prudently and generously decide to have more children, and by those who, for serious reasons and with due respect to moral precepts, decide not to have additional children for either a certain or an indefinite period of time
>
> (*Humanae Vitae* 10).

Physical and psychological health and financial need would be considered among the reasons a couple might limit or space their children.

Perhaps the main question about the teaching against artificial contraception is why the Church sees it as so distinctive from natural family planning, given that the outcomes of both actions are the same: a baby isn't conceived. Some name the difference between artificial contraception and natural family planning in terms of means and ends: though the ends (purposes) in using artificial contraception and natural family planning seem similar (to prevent conception of a child), the ways we achieve those purposes matters as much as the end itself (see e.g. Wilson 2002).

There are two other key differences from the Church's point of view. One is that natural family-planning methods require *both* members of a couple to assent to their use, because natural family planning requires abstinence from sex at certain times. Most forms of artificial contraception, by contrast, can be managed by only one person (usually the woman)

in a couple. From the Church's point of view, this aspect of artificial contraception is unhealthy because it enables the objectification of women. This is perhaps part of the intent in Pope Paul VI's statement:

> Another effect that gives cause for alarm is that a man who grows accustomed to the use of contraceptive methods may forget the reverence due to a woman, and, disregarding her physical and emotional equilibrium, reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desires, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection
>
> (*Humanae vitae* 17).

A few feminists have found themselves agreeing with the Church here: because the woman is deemed primarily responsible for sexual protection, the woman is also the one who is blamed if or when pregnancy occurs (Farquar 1996). This means that men have the ability to have sex without consequences, despite the fact that any method of family planning carries risks. Yet it is the woman who bears the weight of contraceptive failure.

A second difference is that natural family planning enables a couple to practise the virtue of chastity—a virtue all Christians are called to practise. Virtue has often been overlooked in discussions about contraception, since most arguments have been made in relation to natural law. 'Natural' is a tricky word to use, however; sometimes we take 'natural' (p. 432) to mean that it comes 'easily' to us. Yet in Catholic thought, saying something is 'natural' does not necessarily mean it is easy, just as trying to live in a good (virtuous) way is not necessarily easy. *Humanae vitae* argues that using natural methods of spacing birth may be difficult but that ultimately these methods are better for our bodies, our families, and our society (*Humanae vitae* 19 and 20). This is partly why theologian Martin Rhonheimer discusses natural family planning as part of trying to live out a virtue of chastity. The virtue of chastity, difficult as it is to practise, emphasizes that sex is a weighty matter and it can hurt people. The Church cares about the ways in which we use our bodies sexually precisely because sex can be used well or very badly (as we've seen with the sex abuse scandals). On Rhonheimer's view, natural family planning enables more ability for couples to reason about when and why to have children, and more flexibility for the couple to choose good times to have sexual relations. These kinds of reflections help develop peoples' practical wisdom even in matters other than sex, that is their ability to discern the right thing to do, at the right time, and in the right way (Rhonheimer 1999: 94–145).

In the days when *Humanae vitae* was written, natural family planning looked much different than it does now, but just as artificial contraceptive methods have advanced since then, so have natural family-planning methods. Most new methods are extremely accurate (with efficacy ratings as high as that of the various birth control pills) with correct use. Some are very technologically based, using hormone fertility monitors, while others make use of human observations of body temperature and other biological symptoms (descriptions and efficacy rates are to be found at <http://iusenfp.com/home/>). There are

still no artificial contraceptive methods that the Church would consider to be supporting both unity and openness to new life.

As one final note: it is important to note that the Church does not necessarily prohibit the Pill, for example, when it is used to treat medical conditions such as polycystic ovarian syndrome or endometriosis. Turning again to *Humanae vitae,* 15: 'On the other hand, the Church does not consider at all illicit the use of those therapeutic means necessary to cure bodily diseases, even if a foreseeable impediment to procreation should result there from—provided such impediment is not directly intended for any motive whatsoever'. That said, some doctors have developed successful non-contraceptive methods of treating endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and other such diseases. At the end of the next section of the paper I return to these methods.

Artificial Reproduction Techniques

'Artificial reproduction techniques' (ART) is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of techniques medical science employees to help couples achieve pregnancy. The Church finds that some of these techniques are acceptable for couples hoping to conceive. Acceptable ARTs include the use of commonly prescribed drugs: Clomid, which helps stimulate egg follicles; and metformin, which can help with hormone imbalances for certain conditions. These methods are acceptable because they directly heal specific medical conditions.

(p. 433) Two other well-known ARTs are not acceptable, however, because they attempt to bypass or substitute human sexual relationships with an aim towards conceiving children. Artificial insemination and in-vitro fertilization (most commonly referred to as IVF) is a way of helping infertile couples get pregnant. It involves fertilizing a human egg in a petri dish (which is why it is called 'in vitro') and then attempting to implant the resulting zygote within a woman's uterus. In Western secular culture, artificial insemination and in-vitro fertilization are considered good medicine, good interventions that help women achieve pregnancy despite infertility.

Many find the Church's prohibition of these ARTs perplexing, since they offer a chance at childbearing for people who otherwise can't have children. Doesn't the Church *want* people to have children? Indeed, isn't childbearing supposed to be the main point of Christian marriage? As we saw in the earlier section on contraception, however, the Church does not teach that childbearing is the main point of Christian marriage, nor that we should have as many children as possible. As David Cloutier mentions in his chapter within this volume, sacramental marriage has more than one purpose: unity, faithfulness, and procreation. Openness to children is important, but the 'openness' is the operative word since the Church, along with everyone else, knows that children are only sometimes a result of their lovemaking. The reasons why some couples become pregnant quickly and others do not is still largely a mystery. Infertile couples and couples who marry after childbearing years are over are still considered to have valid sacramental marriages.

Yet for the Church, both ART methods traverse too far in the Church's estimation towards desiring life at all costs, more than desiring God and God's purposes for life. These methods break up the components of lovemaking into the simple elements of egg, sperm, uterus, without attention to whole people and whole relationships. In breaking down sex into elemental parts, eggs and sperm become mere instruments and sex becomes merely a tool for having children. These methods objectify couples and their sexual lives, thereby removing some of the other reasons for good sex.

Many Catholic physicians are aware of the fact that IVF and artificial insemination are often used in instances where women have been unable to conceive due to serious conditions such as polycystic ovarian syndrome and endometriosis. As mentioned earlier, some Catholic physicians have therefore developed NaPro Technology to heal these conditions and enable women to conceive without the use of impermissible ARTs (see naprotechnology.com).

Death as Part of Life

While we understand life is a gift from God, we also recognize that we are not immortal and ultimately we are not in control of our lives. We do not love life because it is life, but we love life because it is a gift from God. That is, we worship the Giver of life, not life itself.

(p. 434) This is an important distinction because it is crucial to recognize that much as Catholicism loves and privileges life, the Church is not in favour of prolonging life indefinitely. To do so is to assume that we have more control or knowledge than we think we do over life. Yet while life itself is not controllable, we also believe that we can and should make use of our reason and other God-given talents to improve people's lives and promote healing and justice.

Catholic teaching about care of people at the end of life therefore attempts a great balancing act between the desire to make life better and the knowledge that we are not in control. Palliative care, euthanasia, and physician-assisted suicide are particular actions that lead to consideration of when we're making life better for the seriously ill, and when we are merely prolonging life in unhelpful and even inhuman ways.

Euthanasia is sometimes referred to as 'death with dignity' and is a way of physicians or other caregivers directly bringing about a person's death, often through an overdose of pain medication. Physician-assisted suicide involves the patient inducing his or her own death after having obtained the necessary drugs from a doctor. Additionally, it is important to recognize the distinction between palliative care and euthanasia. Palliative care involves pain management, enabling people to die as comfortably as contemporary medicine allows without administering so much medicine that the patient dies because of the overdose.

The distinctions between these three kinds of action at the end of life become increasingly critical, especially in a time when medical researchers are discovering that people living in a so-called ‘vegetative state’ have much more awareness of their lives than we previously thought. In some cases people in deep comas have been roused temporarily and asked questions about pain and awareness (see Chennu et al. 2013; for a reader-friendly summary of the report see Tate 2013).

In his 2009 encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI writes that ultimately the difficulty with euthanasia is that it is a ‘damaging assertion of control over life that under certain circumstances is deemed no longer worth living’ (*Caritas* 29). John Paul II puts it more strongly in his encyclical *Evangelium vitae*:

> As well as for reasons of a misguided pity at the sight of the patient’s suffering, euthanasia is sometimes justified by the utilitarian motive of avoiding costs which bring no return and which weigh heavily on society. Thus it is proposed to eliminate malformed babies, the severely handicapped, the disabled, the elderly, especially when they are not self-sufficient, and the terminally ill. Nor can we remain silent in the face of other more furtive, but no less serious and real, forms of euthanasia
>
> (*Evangelium vitae* 15).

The concern is not only that a person is killing himself or another human being, and thus disregarding life, but that such killings enable us to consider a wide range of people as unworthy of living, especially those who are most vulnerable. Here, again, is a point where life-and-death issues remain crucially inseparable from social justice issues. Just as working for just wages aims at caring for the poor and vulnerable (p. 435) among us, so Scripture reminds us again and again that we are commanded to care for the widows, the orphans, the sick, the oppressed, and the strangers. To learn how to love truly is not to love the strongest, most normal-looking people; to learn how to love means learning to love the least of these and recognizing that we are no better or worse than they.

Questions about euthanasia and removing life support follow from the same overarching vision of human life: we are utterly loved. We are loved in spite of and even because of illness, pain, and suffering. Many theologians have commented on the great mystery that God is with us in illness and suffering. Nicholas Wolterstorff writes about mourning the death of his son:

> I know now about helplessness—of what to do when there is nothing to do. I have learned coping … To the ‘why’ of suffering we get no firm answer. Of course some suffering is easily seen to be the result of our sin: war, assault, poverty amidst plenty, the hurtful word
>
> (Wolterstorff 1987: 72–74).

Yet not all suffering is the result of sin, and Wolterstorff remarks: ‘Suffering is down at the center of things, deep down where the meaning is. Suffering is the meaning of our world. For Love is the meaning. And Love suffers. The tears of God are the meaning of history’ (Wolterstorff 1987: 90). Such a view of pain and suffering requires a response on the part of those who would see themselves as not in pain and not suffering, which is to be present to those who do suffer.

The Church’s teachings against euthanasia, much like the Church’s teachings against abortion, is accompanied by a call to all people, and especially laypeople, to be present to those who might be tempted by such actions, and to work to alleviate conditions that push people towards that temptation. For ordinary laypeople, such presence might involve visits to those who are ill to reduce loneliness.

For those more specifically involved in medical decisions at the end of life, it is important to recognize the distinctions between what are known as ‘ordinary means’ and ‘extraordinary means’ of giving care. One medical ethics textbook states: ‘there is general agreement that ordinary means must be used to prolong life when fatal or terminal illness threatens, and extraordinary means may be forgone in the same circumstances’ (Ashley, deBlois, and O’Rourke 2006: 184). ‘Ordinary means’ often indicates care we would usually offer to others, such as food and water, while extraordinary means might include various life-support machines, including kidney dialysis machines, and ventilators.

In the past, such a distinction between ordinary and extraordinary means seemed clearer than it does today, with the increasing technologies available to doctors and their patients. What is more important is to consider the specifics involving each patient: their diagnosis and the potential outcomes of medical intervention.

For example, my grandmother, who was diagnosed with slowly developing kidney failure at the age of ninety-five, lived on her own about a half hour’s drive from the nearest dialysis centre. While her doctor promoted kidney dialysis as the obvious step to (p. 436) take, she ended up decided that dialysis was, for her, extraordinary intervention, given her age, as well as the fact that driving to and from the dialysis centre and undergoing treatment were likely to create more hardship and health difficulty than undergoing dialysis. For a young adult acquaintance of mine with a disorder that affected her kidneys, who could use a portable dialysis machine, and who had the prospect of finding a kidney donor and full restoration to participation in her life, dialysis represented an ‘ordinary means’ of care.

Catholic Teaching on War and the Death Penalty

I remember the first time I confronted the question of whether being pro-choice for abortion but anti-choice when it came to other forms of violence-related deaths made sense, just after the start of the first Iraq War in the 1990s. I noticed a car with three stickers:

one said ‘Every Child a Wanted Child: Pro-Child Pro-Woman Pro-Choice’, the second vehemently opposed the war in Iraq, and the third proclaimed, ‘Choose Life Over Death and Kindness Over Killing: Go Vegetarian’. The juxtaposition of these three topics highlighted the question of what needs to be counted when it comes to responding to life.

In the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, the teachings of the Church have tended to be holistic and wide-ranging in response to life, including its understanding of the death penalty and war. Some Catholics consider war and the death penalty to be of a different order than abortion and euthanasia in terms of life-and-death issues because both war and the death penalty seem to have more leeway in Church teaching. While abortion and euthanasia are considered always and everywhere wrong, war and the death penalty seem to pose exceptions.

The latter two are sometimes discussed in relation to ‘prudential judgement’. In this line of thinking, prudential judgement involves the virtue of prudence, which is the ability to act in the right way at the right time, for the right reasons. The people who are able to make a decision ‘in the right way and at the right time’ are those closest to the case at hand. Thus, only a head of state directly involved in judging whether his or her nation is in danger should make a decision about whether to go to war, and only a judge and jury can appropriately make a prudential judgement in relation to the death penalty.

For the sake of God’s gift of life, however, we should worry about putting too much at stake in the idea of prudential judgement when it comes to the death penalty and war. Very often, the concept of ‘prudential judgement’ is used to suggest that no one, including Church authorities may really question a political leader’s judgement about going to war, or a judge and jury’s committal of a prisoner to death. Yet in these cases, if an innocent life has been taken, it is akin to murder; even in cases where soldiers or guilty criminals are killed, the Church asks us to take care that we are respecting life well. Relegating (p. 437) these decisions to prudential judgement often gives more favour to the person making a judgement—regardless of that person’s overall concern for the gift of life—than to the people whose lives will be taken, even and especially when those are the people with little power.

Pacifism and Non-Violence

The Church’s teachings against war and the concept of ‘just war’ follow similar contours as beginning and end of life issues towards privileging God’s gifts of life and love. Because going to war involves the potential of killing, especially the potential of killing innocent people, we must always avoid war if possible.

Indeed, a strong strand in Catholic tradition is that Catholics should seek peace over seeking any form of violence. Some of the earliest Christians prohibited the newly baptized from being soldiers; if a soldier wished to become a Christian that person needed to find another profession. The second-century Christian thinker Origen writes:

> Thus, the Apostle [Paul], being aware that physical wars are no longer to be waged by us but that our struggles are to be only battles of the soul against spiritual adversaries, gives orders to the soldiers of Christ like a military commander when he says (Eph. 6:11), 'Put on the armour of God so as to be able to hold your ground against the wiles of the devil'
>
> (Origen 1983).

Contemporary groups such as the Catholic Peace Fellowship and Pax Christi advocate against participation in war and other forms of violence. Theological reasons for seeking peace instead of going to war include that Jesus is our Prince of Peace and the final sacrifice, which has already been made on our behalf. Jesus calls us to be people of peace, people who turn the other cheek, and who respond even to enemies with love.

One concern many have regarding taking a non-violent stance against war is that it can seem to do nothing in the face of grave evil. Pacifism seems passive, disinterested in truly seeking justice. Yet since Catholics believe in seeking justice, we cannot stand by and 'do nothing' especially when the least among us are threatened. Thus, many Catholics who espouse a position against all war would name themselves not a pacifists, but as non-violentists. Non-violentists seek alternate ways to work for justice, including other forms of political activism and making attempts to live peacefully in their daily lives, believing that the peace we express in our households fosters peace in other areas of life.

Just War Theory

Just war theorists and pacifists/non-violentists share certain commitments in common, especially a desire that innocent people not be killed. Because Christians believe that (p. 438) the fullness of justice cannot be had here on earth, but is only in God's hands, war must be understand as a very limited way of achieving a very limited kind of peace. Accordingly, the just war tradition, which dates to pre-Christian times, has developed in particularly Christian ways as a means of guiding Christians about whether or not to participate in war.

There are three ways in which wars are judged to be 'just' or not. The first way is known as '*jus ad bellum*', or whether we have just reasons for going to war. Among these criteria include the stipulation that the nation declaring war can never be the instigators of that war. We must also be seeking to go to war for reasons of justice, particularly defence of the helpless. The ones who declare war must have lawful authority to declare war.

The second way a war is judged on the basis of justice is called '*jus in bello*', or, 'justice in war'. The way we go about warring with another nation or people has to be just as well. The criteria here tend to relate to questions about whether we're killing innocent people or not. For example, if it is determined that a siege might be a good way to win a battle, we must take care that the people whose town is affected by siege, and who are not themselves soldiers, have ample warning of the siege and time to leave before effecting the siege. We cannot kill indiscriminately. One of the chief reasons some just war theorists be-

lieve that most contemporary wars are unjust is the fact that we use drones and similar technologies that are not capable of distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, which means that the non-combatants are being murdered.

The final way wars are judged is '*jus post bellum*'; that is, whether justice is enacted after a war is over. We cannot be so punitive in demanding war reparations that people in the affected country do not have the means to eat, find shelter, and obtain good work.

Death Penalty

Opposition to the death penalty stems from Catholic belief that life is God's gift and that all people are bearers of the image of God. In the contemporary era, the Church deems the death penalty to be something to be used sparingly and only in locations where life-long imprisonment is not feasible due to civil unrest or lack of a strong government (*CCC* 2267). Many nations have not found the death penalty at all necessary and have abolished its use.

In nations where the death penalty still persists, pro-death-penalty advocates often express concern for whether true justice can be done. From the Church's standpoint, however, the death penalty raises questions about what kind of justice we seek, and whether it is justice focused on God's gifts of love and life. Because we all sin and all fall far short of witnessing to the love that God offers but we receive God's grace regardless, we also recognize that other people, even those who commit very grave evils, need opportunities to respond to God's gifts of life and love. Indeed, it may be those very people who commit acts that seem so devoid of life and love that most need chances to experience and witness life and love themselves.

(p. 439) In addition, many Catholics are concerned with the several cases where innocent people have been put to death. Just as with abortion, where innocent life is spared, so too not practising the death penalty is seen as a way of ensuring that innocent life is spared. Advocates against the death penalty, such as Sister Helen Prejean, have further written about the racial and economic inequalities surrounding the death penalty: that it is precisely those people who are the 'least among us' who are executed at rates far higher than in privileged white classes (see Prejean 1994: ch. 3 and 10). Yet again, life-and-death issues cannot be separated from social-justice issues about race and economic class.

Concern for Animal Rights and the Environment

I once visited a parish community in El Salvador in a dangerous neighbourhood, filled with poor refugees of the civil war there who had had little choice but to build homes on an industrial rubbish heap when they returned from exile. The doctors at their local medical clinic treated many environmentally caused diseases that led to needless suffering and death, especially of children in the area. Treatment of the environment became, for

them, just one more way in which powerful people waged war on those deemed to have less valuable lives. The parishioners started the only organic farm in the region as a means of protesting this loss of life as well as cultivating hope in their war-torn country, a clear statement of the importance of considering the environment as a life and death concern. Pope Benedict XVI expressed a similar connection in his 2010 address, 'If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation', in which he argues that the pollution and destruction of the environment leads to political unrest, economic havoc, and loss of jobs, health, and life (Benedict XVI 2010: 5 and 7).

Theologically, Catholics have concern for the environment because it, too, is understood as God's gift of love and life. In Genesis, God commands that we be stewards of all that God has created. Pope Benedict suggests that in caring for the environment, we are being ' "stewards" of God himself' (Benedict XVI 2010: 6). We are co-creators with God, entrusted with loving all of God's gifts.

Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* makes clear the connection between Catholics' respect for life and environmental concerns. He juxtaposes concern for the environment with more traditionally understood life issues:

> concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion. How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties?
>
> (*Laudato Si'* 120).

(p. 440) Francis therefore calls Catholics and all people of goodwill to be attentive to those times and places when we are dismissive of other people, or of animals, or of the earth because it is 'troublesome' or 'inconvenient'. The pope calls for Westerners especially to embody concern for the poor by being much more careful of, among many things, our water use, overfishing and use of oceans, the way agriculture is practised, and the kinds of foods we eat. For example, water use affects the whole of the earth, but particularly affects the poor who have lack of access to clean water (*Laudato Si'* 29). Factory farming, with its focus on industrial crops and mass butchering of animals, goes against life in several ways. One is the way in which animals are not themselves respected as creatures created by God. They are made to do things that God did not create them to do: cows have stomachs best suited to eating grass, for example, but in industrial farming, cows are made to eat corn and other grains. This loss of appropriate food for cattle leads to infection and the overuse of antibiotics (for an excellent discussion of contemporary food issues see Grummet and Muers 2010). As medical science has begun to demonstrate, our current farming and eating practices appear to be harming us as well as the animals we use, in the form of increased obesity, diabetes, cancers, and other debilitating conditions (Pollan 2006). We shall have to seek other ways of feeding the hungry while not killing ourselves in the process.

Conclusions

Catholics cannot intelligibly separate social-justice questions relating to the environment from life-and-death issues, just as with any of the other issues discussed in this chapter. At every point where questions are raised about life and death, the Church advocates celebrating life but not idolizing life, and working especially on behalf of the most vulnerable among us. If the Church's stance on life and death seems unrealistic, it is incumbent on us to respond. As I've suggested in this chapter, those of us who are baptized are therefore given a constant charge: to love peoples' lives so much that we are willing to be present in real ways to those who suffer, and to campaign against injustices that prevent us from seeing and loving God's gift of life to us.

Suggested Reading

On the subjects of this chapter see also *CCC* 2270-75 (abortion), 2366-2372 (contraception), 2276-79 (euthanasia), 2302-2319 (war), 2266-67 (death penalty), 2415-18 (environment).

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Catholic Social Teaching

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Abstract and Keywords

This essay considers the modern tradition of Catholic social teaching (CST). CST finds its roots in the biblical, patristic, and medieval periods, but was inaugurated in particular by Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum novarum (1891) and has been sustained by a range of papal encyclicals and conciliar documents since. The documents of CST emphasize that human beings are created for mutual cooperation and a pursuit of common good in social, economic, and political life. The essay considers first CST's developing account of how social relations may be governed by Christian charity. It then considers the nature of property within economic relations as conceived within CST. The final section considers CST's reflections on political life, which is understood as primarily personal and dependent on relations of mutual rights and responsibilities that are directed to the common good.

Keywords: charity, common good, justice, economics, politics, Vatican II, Catholic social teaching

CATHOLIC social teaching is a tradition of commentary on economic, social, and political life—from the just wage, to the need for local, civic organizations, to human rights, and war and peace. Teachings on these matters can be traced back to Mosaic law, the prophets of Israel, and, of course, to Jesus. Jesus evokes a long history of prophetic witness to God's justice and mercy in his inaugural proclamation, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand … ' (Mark 1:15) and his instructions to 'strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness … ' (Matt. 6:33). Jesus puts the call of Israel in terms of the two great commands, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart… [And] you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:29–31). Following these biblical mandates, ancient and medieval writers, such as John Chrysostom, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas, establish a continuous tradition of commentary on justice and love. These biblical teachings and tradition of commentary are the roots of Catholic social teaching (CST).

CST refers to a modern school of thought and set of texts. A course in the subject usually begins with Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum novarum* (1891). Because *Rerum novarum* ('new things') marks a modern starting point, subsequent papal encyclicals are sometimes writ-

ten on its anniversary, such as *Quadragesimo anno* (‘forty years’) by Pius XI and *Centesimus annus* (‘hundred years’) by John Paul II. The tradition includes other documents by John Paul II and by popes John XXIII, Pius XII, Paul VI, and Benedict XVI, along with Vatican II’s *Gaudium et spes* (1965), *Justice in the World* by the 1971 Synod of Bishops, and documents by conferences of bishops, such as the Conference of the Latin American Bishops (CELAM), which meet in Medellín, Columbia in 1968. Many syllabi in CST also include works and authors that have an important role in shaping the tradition. Some key examples are the French philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) and the American Jesuit John Courtney Murray (1904–1967).

The texts and issues related to CST are numerous, but there is a consistent orientation to social life throughout the documents. In fact, the very priority of ‘social life’ is a distinctive element and an apt way to summarize and review the tradition. Think about the very concept of the ‘kingdom’ in Jesus’ teachings. It is an image of a people (p. 444) gathered in God’s reign. Consider the two great commands. Love binds, and the two love commands bind us together through the love of God. Human beings are created as the image of God, and as God’s image, being human is shared ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ in relation to our common fulfilment and common goods of the earth. According to the *Gaudium et spes* (*GS* 12), the human being is ‘by his innermost nature… a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential’. Human beings are created for mutual cooperation and a pursuit of common goods in social, economic, and political life. This point is fundamental to CST and will be the central theme of this essay.

Social Relations

In 1931, in *Quadragesimo*, Pius XI relates love and justice in a way that is strikingly similar to both Leo XII in 1891 and Benedict XVI in 2009. Pius explains that the foundation of economic exchange, along with distributive and social justice, is love. Pius XI makes this point while defending the good of charitable giving. At the beginning of the twentieth century, as well as the beginning of the twenty-first, charity is disparaged by some who are deeply concerned with justice. They claim that dropping extra coins in the poor box does nothing to challenge systematic injustice and the growing gap between rich and poor. In this view, charity makes us feel better, but it actually perpetuates a system of injustice and a cycle of dependence for the poor. Certainly, Pius XI is challenging injustice. But his response to the so-called ineffectual nature of throwing coins in a poor box is, not to reject charity, but to hold that our giving does not go deep enough. Tossing coins in a box is certainly a good thing, but it is insufficient. It is insufficient, not because it lacks attention to economic systems, because it is impersonal. Charity in its fullest form is one person giving to another.

The ambiguity of our word, charity, is important. Charity, as giving aid to another, is a sign of charity as *caritas*, which Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) defines as friendship with God (*ST* II.IIae, q.23, a.1). Consider this lengthy quotation from Pius XI. Pius admits that ‘charity cannot take the place of justice’. But he argues that even if there were a situation

of perfect justice, personal relationships of charity would still be required. Justice can remove 'the cause of social strife, but can never bring about a union of hearts and minds'. Pius XI continues:

> Yet this union, binding men together, is the main principle of stability in all institutions, no matter how perfect they may seem… In its absence, as repeated experience proves, the wisest regulations come to nothing… [I]t will be possible to unite all in harmonious striving for the common good, when all sections of society have the intimate conviction that they are members of a single family and children of the same Heavenly Father, and further that they are one body in Christ and 'severally members one of another' (Rom. 12:5), so that 'if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with it'.
>
> (1 Cor. 12:26) (*Quadragesimo* 137)

(p. 445) Charity is not primarily an exchange of coins, but our recognition of kinship which then leads to 'solicitous and effective regard', 'kindly feeling', and active service to each other and the whole.

The context of Pius XI's call for charity is the disparity between rich and poor, the politically powerful and the common people, employers and labourers. In regard to these inequalities, Pius XI's references to Rom. 12 and 1 Cor. 12 are significant. In each, St Paul uses the analogy of the human body to speak about communities of diverse, sometimes antagonistic people. The overarching theme in Paul's letter to Romans is the astounding but delicate union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, and with the Corinthians, he is dealing with what seem to be insufferably prideful and divisive members of a community. In Rom. 12:1–3, Paul asks his readers to be transformed by the gospel, and he discourages the kind of self-regard that sets oneself above and apart from others. Pius XI cites v. 5. 'For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another' (vv. 4–5). In 1 Cor. 12, Paul develops these points further when faced with the arrogance of some in Corinth. 'Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body", that would not make it any less a part of the body … ' (vv. 14–15). Paul makes the point plain: 'God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another' (vv. 24–25).

In short, diverse, even antagonistic individuals and groups have a role and place in relation to the life of the whole. This relationship to the whole does not mean that individuality is lost. On the contrary, individual gifts are seen as indispensible contributions to common life. Further, the benefit of the doubt and greater honour goes to the 'lesser' members rather than those who claim to be self-sufficient. In the second half of the twentieth century, this priority of St Paul's 'weak' is called 'the preferential for the poor'. John Paul II (*Sollicitudo* 42) calls it 'a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity' (compare CELAM 1968, 9). This image of the social body assumes that people are

different and that differences can be complementary in achieving common purposes. Consider Leo XIII's arguments against the class conflict produced by nineteenth-century capitalism and considered essential by socialism:

> Just as the symmetry of the human frame is the result of the suitable arrangement of the different parts of the body, so in a State is it ordained by nature that these two classes should dwell in harmony and agreement, and should, as it were, fit into one another: capital cannot do without labour nor labour without capital.
>
> (*Rerum* 19)

Leo XIII's claim depends on common goods and purposes. In *Rerum novarum*, Leo is dealing with the plight of workers in a new age of industrialization. But his thinking is drawn from a labour-intensive agricultural setting (*Rerum* 6-8) and a long tradition of criticizing landed nobility for their disregard for the plight of the peasantry (Avila 2004). The landowner needs labourers to cultivate the land; otherwise, no fruit is (p. 446) produced. Peasants need land to work; otherwise, they have no place to cultivate, create, and sustain their lives. Therefore, there is a natural bond between landowner and labourer, which is violated when the goods of the earth are not shared. On this point, St Ambrose (340–397) is worth reading. His set of sermons on Naboth's vineyard (1 Kgs. 21) is a classic in Christian social thought. He denounces the self-serving use of wealth by landed nobility and argues that 'the earth was established in common for all, rich and poor' (Ambrose 1997: 118). Ambrose does not recommend that the rich relinquish their ownership of the land; he calls them to use it in accord with its natural purpose. Property is an instrument of common life.

The same holds in CST when the property in question is not arable land but the means of production, such as factories, machines, technology, raw materials, etc. In an encyclical 'On Human Work' (*Laborem* 1981), John Paul II will add capital itself to the list of analogies to land. By the mid-twentieth century (in contrast to the end of the nineteenth), money is used to produce money without any product or service to a customer. In this context, capital can appear to have a life of its own (Long 1996). John Paul II (*Laborem* 12) shows that this view of capital is an illusion—a surface impression that distorts the fact that all capital is the product of human work. The entire encyclical focuses on this priority of the labourer. This is not an innovation by John Paul II; the economic perspective of CST as a whole is the good of the worker. At bottom, the economy is a relationship of persons in terms of common work, its goods, and the social good. In this sense, ownership of capital has the purpose of joining together employer and employee in a community of work and its contributions to social life (*Centesimus* 32).

This section began with the appeal of Pius XI to charity. Recall that for Pope Pius, charity does not replace justice. He does not recommend charity as an alternative to political and systematic protections for the poor. Charity is the fundamental reason for systematic change. There are libertarians and proponents of laissez-faire economics who, in contrast, divide care for the needy from justice—who reduce justice to rules of economic exchange (commutative justice). CST (along with Pius XI) does not set love and justice

apart. The image of charity is, not tossing out coins, but giving person to person. Charity is important, not as an alternative to systems of justice, but as the fellow feeling, attentiveness, and action on behalf of others, which has its source in a deep sense of human kinship and, as human kinship, is at the root of justice.

In *Centesimus annus* 10, John Paul II lists various terms throughout the tradition that point to this attentive self-giving and action on behalf of those in need. He points to his own use of 'solidarity' in *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (38), Leo XIII's appeal to friendship and brotherly love (*Rerum* 21), Pius XI's 'social charity' (*Quadragesimo* 126), and Pope Paul VI's 'civilization of love' (Paul VI 1975). John Paul II argues that if charity were simply giving out of one's abundance (dropping coins in a basket), this form of charity would miss the point of giving. The point is to devote oneself to other persons and, by doing so, change the structures and habits of our day-to-day lives. He asks us:

(p. 447)

> to create lifestyles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments… [T]he decision to invest, that is, to offer people an opportunity to make good use of their own labour, is also determined by an attitude of human sympathy and trust in Providence. …
>
> (*Centesimus* 36)

This is the 'social' of CST—relations of a body with many diverse parts united in a common good and especially attentive to its poorer members.

Economic Relations

In the framework of CST outlined earlier, economic relations are not simply 'economic' but express social relations. Too often, for example, our ownership of things divides people rather than unites. When I reflect on my own inaction in regard to the poor, I realize that the most difficult task is not feeding the hungry but seeing them as kin. If they were family, feeding them would be as reflexive as putting food on the kitchen table. Like many households, ours is one where meals mark the rhythms of common life, and as guests enter our lives, they naturally eat with us. If the poor were kin, hospitality to them would be as common as entertaining cousins, uncles, and aunts. Hospitality to extended family is customary even if a great deal of annoyance and effort are involved. In this regard, it is not the effort and expense of feeding the hungry that holds us back as much as our presumptions about membership and the purposes of private property.

This section outlines the purposes of property—from things that we have for our personal use to privately owned businesses. CST argues for a 'free economy' or a 'business economy' (*Centesimus* 42). It is the claim of CST that socialism and so-called free-market capitalism undermine freedom and the goals of a business economy. In this regard, the central issue in economic matters is the just wage. In his encyclical, 'On Human Work' John

Paul II holds that ‘a just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system … ’ (*Laborem* 19). Wages, he maintains, are the ‘practical means whereby the vast majority of people can have access to those goods which are intended for common use’. This common use is the central principle for understanding the goods of property, business enterprise, and wages in CST.

The basic framework of common use is summarized by Thomas Aquinas in his questions on justice and love in the second part of Part II of the *Summa Theologica*: specifically questions on property and the order of love. Aquinas argues for personal/private ownership because it ensures personal responsibility in caring for things and in putting things in service to human goods. Personal (or ‘private’) ownership accords with the social nature of human beings and provides for the good ordering of society. In CST, Aquinas’ arguments will be used to defend the good of personal property against socialism and the common purposes of personal property against laissez-faire capitalism. (p. 448) I am using the term, ‘personal’ property, in order to keep an important contrast in view. The typically modern idea of private property emphasizes that only I determine the purposes and use of my possessions. In a sense, I am lord of my property and define its existence. In CST, the proper use of ‘private’ property is determined by me in relation to its ultimate source and end, which is God, and by its practical, this-worldly purpose, which is the common good.

Like the patristic authors before him, Aquinas holds that personal ownership has its rationale in common use. Food is for the hungry, and as a matter of justice, the hungry have a claim on my food (*ST* II.IIae, q.66, a.7). Justice is giving others what is due to them, and the fruits of the earth are for human beings. This claim does not amount to a rejection of personal/private ownership because it presumes a complex understanding of my place and role within social life. For Aquinas and CST, my actual use of possessions such as food will correspond to a web of relationships. Priority goes to those with whom I am most naturally and practically connected. I have particular relationships and responsibilities to my parents, spouse, children, and neighbours near to me. Overlapping these relations is God’s nearness to me, and as a consequence, my nearness to those who are near to God—that is, to the poor and to the saints (II.IIae, q.26). Again, in relation to the poor, do not think of throwing coins in a basket, but of befriending and making practical connections to the hungry, resident alien, sick, and imprisoned (Matt. 25:31–46). The command to love your neighbour is a call to particular, social relationships. Communion is always particular (i.e., sacramental), and the particular is properly ordered to and expressive of the good of the whole.

Consider two examples of how this view of property and common life could change how we live. First, one consistent use of financial resources in modern society is to live in places where we can avoid contact with those in need. We, the non-poor, use our wealth to make sure that we do not have poor people as our neighbours. We live in ‘good’ neighbourhoods. They live in some other part of town. Think about how differently we might think about social life if poor and non-poor shared common concerns of neighbourhood—childrearing, the use of parks and gardens, safety, clean streets, etc. Think about how dif-

ferently our property (for example, gardens, sugar, flour, pots, pans, automobiles, lawnmowers) would be used in common life. In this setting, systematic issues of love and justice would be worked out in the day-to-day relationships of neighbour to neighbour. Charity would be, not so much 'giving out of abundance to the weak', but simply cooperating with others in our shared life.

A second example is less personal. The Daughters of Charity (Maryland, USA) have taken up a campaign to limit the increased privatization of water, especially our reliance on an industry in bottled and branded water, and to make us aware of how we waste water by extended showers and excessive watering of lawns (Daughters of Charity 2010). Potable water is already a privilege of developed nations and the upper classes of underdeveloped nations. The private ownership, branding, packaging, and distribution of private water increase the costs of clean water and its waste, as well as the energy and pollution produced by the production and disposal of individually sized plastic containers. Clean water is a public trust; it is being made into a private commodity. The (p. 449) privatization of water mediates social divisions where we do not see what the thirsty of the world would see clearly if they knew us. Our lawns receive far more potable water than they do. The issue is the structure of our day-to-day habits and relationships. In our use of water, we too often think only of ourselves.

When considering issues such as water use on a worldwide scale, John Paul II (*Sollicitudo* 28) uses the language of underdevelopment and superdevelopment. Underdevelopment deprives people of what is needed for basic material and social development (for example, housing and education). Superdevelopment results in a 'civilization of consumption' where having things takes the place of our full social development and enrichment as human beings. Those in a situation of superdevelopment—like those in a situation of underdevelopment but for opposite reasons—experience social and spiritual impoverishment. They (unlike the poor) are able to hide their impoverishments through a constant acquisition of things. Underdevelopment and superdevelopment are not merely matters of personal greed. John Paul II (*Sollicitudo* 37) refers to 'structures of sin', which have their source in personal sin. Self-centred attitudes and activities have become social and economic habits that we experience as natural and normal, like what the Daughters of Charity call the unreflective culture of investing in my ability to 'carry-my-bottled-water-with-me-wherever-I-go' rather than water as a common good of the earth.

A typical response to structural injustice and inequity is to call for corrections to an impersonal system, but this is not the perspective of CST. Fundamental to a typically modern view of economic systems is the belief that there is a separate economic sphere that functions according to impersonal and invariant laws—analogous to laws of gravity and motion but pertaining to economic exchange. The legacy of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (first published in 1776) is that self-interest is considered an impersonal, rational law of economics and that concern for one's neighbour as well as the promotion of social goods work against these rational laws (Smith 1994: Bk. IV, Ch. 2). CST argues the oppo-

site, that economic exchange depends on social relations and that corrections in the system require personal change.

A common modern response to social and economic problems is to impose disinterested systems, promote technology, and form bureaucracies that circumvent the fact that we cannot count on people to change. Global warming and our dependence on high levels of fossil fuels are good examples. Studies have shown that the more a person knows about global warming and its relation to energy use, the less likely that individual is to think that there is any difference a person can make by changing one's behaviour (Kellstedt, Zahran and Vedlitz 2008). Most hope for a scientific solution that will not require us to change—technology that will allow our increasing consumption and energy use and yet magically produce a cleaner environment.

The great economic and political systems of the modern age are similar. Communists created oppressive governing institutions because the people were not ready for their democratic ideals. In response to the misuse of personal property by the rich, they took it away from people (even the poor) by force. Lenin and Stalin believed that the revolution would be for the people despite the people. On the other hand, laissez-faire (p. 450) capitalism is a system where, its proponents claim, everyone should look out only for themselves and a better world for everyone will be the result. A common corollary is that when we try to improve our world by regulating the market, we only make matters worse. It is striking how willingly many of us accept these contradictions as perfectly rational. However, CST consistently denounces ideological schemes such as socialism and laissez-faire capitalism when they promise a better economic or social world without personal change and commitments to serving our neighbours. CST rejects merely technological solutions to human problems such as global warming and world-wide poverty. The approach of CST to these problems is a renewal of persons and communities.

In line with this personal/social approach, John Paul II (*Centesimus* 35) calls a business 'a community of persons'. This definition has implications for how we view the goal of profit as well as 'superdevelopment' and 'structures of sin' outlined earlier. One source of such structures is an 'all-consuming desire for profit' (*Sollicitudo* 37). This phrase 'all-consuming' might produce an image of a maniacal billionaire, but its meaning is more ordinary and structural. If something is 'all-consuming', it is the single goal which all other goals and efforts serve. Likewise, 'superdevelopment' is a situation where the consumption of things, rather than the development of people, is the central feature of an economy. John Paul II is criticizing an ideology that puts profit as the fundamental and final motive of a business. Like CST as a whole, John Paul II views profit as an essential but instrumental good. Profit is an instrument for sustaining a community of work, which provides a good living for its workers and produces something good for other people.

In the standard view, the competing models in business ethics are the shareholder and stakeholder theories (Beauchamp, Bowie and Arnold 2008). The shareholder theory holds that the overriding goal of all business is profit, and the fundamental responsibilities of those who run a business are to those who invest money. The theory is simple and unified:

all activities of a business, assuming they are legal, are judged by their production of profit and service to the investor. In contrast, the stakeholder theory argues that the investor is only one among many persons or groups who have a stake in the good of a company. There are also managers, employees, suppliers, consumers, and civic communities (neighbourhoods, towns, and cities). The interests of these stakeholders are weighed against the interests of shareholders.

This stakeholder theory is close to an understanding of a business in CST. The difference is that the stakeholder theory assumes a social context of competing self-interests. It sets up the situation where one might say, 'We could have had a more successful business (i.e., more profits), but we also have commitments to our employees and the community'. CST, in contrast, defines the success of a business in terms of how it sustains a community of persons joined together by their good work. 'We could have had a more successful business, if we had not been concerned only with profits'. Rather than competing interests, there is an order of subordinate and superior goods. Profits are indispensable but subordinate goods. They serve the higher good of sustaining communities of good work—that is, work that serves the good of persons in social relation.

(p. 451) It is for this reason that John Paul II calls the just wage the standard by which economic systems are judged. Leo XIII (*Rerum* 34) argues that the level of wages ought not to be determined only by the market. If, for example, the demand for workers were notably lower than the supply of workers, the labour market would allow that inadequate wages could be paid. People need work, and they would take the pay. But Leo calls this situation a form of coercion. Such a market in labour is not a free market (*Rerum* 34). It makes the worker a slave with no choice but barely to exist, or to die. It does not accord with the nature of the human being, who through intelligent and free action puts her life in order and participates in common life. Mere subsistence is not worthy of the human being. Our work should extend to the higher goods of persons in community—to 'reasonable and frugal comfort', dignified work worthy of the image of God, and a means to give to others and contribute to common life (*Rerum* 34–35; see also *Laborem* 8–9).

The just wage is not only for the worker; it concerns the social body. As the wage is determined by justice, it has to do with weighing the needs of various members. So, if the labour market or powerful labour unions were to give labourers an advantage, they ought not to demand a wage that undermines the health of commerce or the good of their employers (*Quadragesimo* 70–74). This use of labour power is also a form of coercion. Profit for the employer is subordinate but indispensible to the free market economy, and personal/private business is an essential element in the good ordering of common life. A just wage will protect a business economy. If a particular market or economy cannot sustain a wage that is just for employee and employer, there is something wrong with the social relations that are expressed in and by the economic system. Change is required in our habits of personal and common life (for example, share more things).

Political Relations

Human beings are political beings in the sense that they naturally organize common life in ways that transcend specific relationships. Social and political roles precede us, and we live into them. Whether an empire, nation, or city, we share a bond and system of organization with people whom we do not know personally. Still, in CST, political life is primarily personal and dependent on relations of mutual rights and responsibilities that are directed to the common good. Political organization and authority ought to serve and enhance the kinds of local/personal relations that best promote the good of specific groups and individuals in relationship to the good of the whole. In terms of justice, the allocation of goods and services by political authority (distributive justice) ought to enhance fair exchange between citizens (commutative justice) and the social contributions of individual citizens joining together for the common good (social justice). This section of the essay primarily develops the ideas of distributive and social justice. We begin by attending to the concept of the common good.

(p. 452) The term ‘common good’ has already been used several times in the previous sections on social and economic relations. In contemporary parlance, the common good tends to mean an aggregate of individual self-interests. The term is not used in this way in CST. The common good is based, not on self-interest per se, but on the goods and practices that fulfil human beings (for example, health care, education, good work,). Certainly, fulfilment as persons includes what should be our self-interests. But self-interest as a free-standing category implies that each private ‘self’ determines the meaning of life. The common good, in contrast, points to how we are connected to others in common life. *Gaudium et spes* (*GS* 26) defines the common good as ‘the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment’ (see John XXIII’s *Mater et Magistra* 65–67). This fulfilment comes not only through rights but also through performing service to others in the community. We are fulfilled through active participation in common life. This idea of fulfilment gives shape to the approach of CST to political participation and human rights.

There is no golden age of economic and political relationships, but the terms of analysis and criticism shift in the modern era. In ancient and medieval contexts, political and economic systems were joined. For example, recent scholarship on what we call ‘feudalism’ shows that it was not a consistent system but different sets of relationships based on loyalty and reciprocal (mutual but not equal) rights and obligations (Quick 2010). In any case, the shift in the modern era is that politics, like economics, is believed to be a separate sphere (Taylor 2004). CST resists this separation of social roles and duties from economic and political life. The pre-modern church criticized political authorities for not living up to their social station; modern CST argues as well that political authority and organization ought to protect and not encroach on the roles and duties of citizens in social life.

This transition can be seen in Leo XIII's *Rerum novarum* (1891). Nineteenth-century Europe is marked by transitions back and forth from republicanism to monarchy, from a new order to the old, and back again. Leo XIII's conception of the political order is hierarchical and paternalistic. Civil authority and forms of government, he argues, take various forms for example, republican or monarchical). But whatever the form, the origin and source of civil authority is God. Rulers (whether kings or parliaments) have a responsibility to guide their people according to the will of the Creator. Their rule ought to reflect God's paternal and providential care. In an encyclical, *Diuturnum Illud* (*On the Origin of Civil Power*) in 1881, Pope Leo is worried about the implications of modern theories of the state. Characteristically modern theories presume that a social order does not exist in a pure 'state of nature', but is constructed by the implied consent of individuals, for the protection of their self-interests. Leo XII asserts, in contrast, that social membership is intrinsic to being human (*Diuturnum* 12). Because membership is natural, political organization has an intrinsic purpose: the good of the social order, which includes moral as well as material goods and faithfulness to God.

In *Diuturnum* 16, Leo XIII worries that forms of government based on self-interest are inclined to privilege the interests of individuals or powerful interest groups. They (p. 453) will be no better than the pagan emperors of old or modern 'absolute monarchs' who also set themselves up as gods. The analogy in *Rerum Novarum* is with industrialists or landowners who reject God's purposes of creation, put their property to merely private purposes, and use workers for their own personal ends. When this happens in a political context, the rights and duties that have been given by God to members of a society are likely to be taken over by the political ruler. At *Diuturnum* 11, Leo XIII—in the framework of his paternalism—worries that the duties of priests and fathers of families are under siege. In *Rerum novarum*, he focuses on the rights and duties of workers who are heads of households. On one hand, socialism takes over the natural rights of family. On the other, industrial capitalists, who have the responsibility to care for their workers, are not paying a just wage and, by this neglect, make it impossible for fathers to perform their rightful duties in providing for their families and in contributing to common life.

The point here, is that Leo XIII does not argue for the rights of individuals *as individuals*, but in terms of their roles and relations to others. His claims about the rights of workers (*Rerum* 9) are based on their rights relative to 'man's social and domestic obligations'. Rights correspond to 'states of life', and states of life assume a differentiated social body. Consider the framework of 'private' property outlined earlier. Leo XIII holds that ownership is a right due to the individual as a human being who has a role in common life. Specifically in reference to the industrial worker, the pope argues that just wages are due to him relative to his obligations to his family. At *Rerum novarum* 10, the paradigmatic worker is already bound within a society of family that precedes any systems of politics or economy. Socialism, ironically, must be rejected because it violates the rights of the worker by taking over his social and domestic duties (duties to use private property for the social good). Social-contract theory and the kinds of government promoted by laissez-faire capitalism are also rejected. So-called free-market capitalism conceives of the worker as

an individual and not as individual-with-inherent-social-roles such as the mutual duties and reciprocal relations of family.

Social duties precede the state; they are the basis of political rights and the authority of the state to distribute goods to citizens (distributive justice) and to establish a legal framework for a fair exchange of goods (commutative justice). Leo XIII maintains that 'rulers should safeguard the community and all its parts' (*Rerum* 28). In the modern individualist framework and the social-contract theory, political reasoning follows from self-interest rather than social roles and the common good. CST conceives of the distribution and exchange of goods for the sake of individuals-as-contributors-to-common-life. In terms of commutative justice (contractual exchange), the government intervenes to ensure that a just wage on the basis not only of the market, but also on what workers need in order to perform their familial and social roles and to experience a measure of fulfilment as an active member of society. In terms of distributive justice, the state has the responsibility to allocate, if necessary, the goods needed to be a member of a society—material goods such as food, water, and basic health care, and access to education, religious institutions, and cultural developments within a society. The goal is not equality in wealth and education, or for all to be the same. The question to ask is what (p. 454) goods are needed for the dignity of persons as contributing members of society whether they are upper class or commoners.

This framework—of rights relative to social role—is consistent in CST as its perspective on human rights developed during the twentieth century. The problem with Leo XIII's nineteenth-century perspective is that his conception of social roles is narrow. For example, he accepts the bourgeois ideal that a woman's role corresponds to a domestic sphere or 'housemaking', which is distinct and a social alternative to the economic sphere of production (*Rerum* 33). Another example is Leo XIII's paternalistic orientation. He thinks of social roles in terms of mentor and pupil: rulers teach citizens, employers guide employees, fathers/husbands command the family. In the second half of the twentieth century, the same social assumptions cannot be taken for granted. In terms of governments, for example, there is recognition that religious freedom, rather than the imposition of religion, is necessary to respect the religious and moral duties of citizens. In a context of more social mobility and less consistent social roles, CST turns to the language of human rights. But human rights are not framed as the rights of individuals. Rights continue to be understood as connected to duties of membership in relationship to common goods.

The key document on human rights is John XXIII's 1963 *Pacem in terris* (*Peace on Earth*). At the beginning and end of his discussion of rights and duties, John XXIII sets the context by appeal to the nature of the human being, as intelligent, free, and social, and to the design of God in creation (*Pacem* 9–10, 35–45). Both rights and duties are outlined in terms of the fulfilment of human beings. There is an ascending order of rights (*Pacem* 11–27). At the base are rights 'to life, to bodily integrity, and the means suitable for the proper development of life… food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and finally the necessary social services'. Pope John's outline suggests a social world with more mobility and democratic participation than Leo XIII imagines. Leo XIII tends to think of personal fulfil-

ment only in terms of work, family life, and religious practice. For John XXIII, proper development also includes education, art, benefits of culture, and opportunities for training in skills important to a society. Human fulfilment necessitates the rights of conscience, religious liberty, and the right to chose one's state of life. Men and women have also the right to form communities and associations and, through these, to pursue social goods by their own initiative—'to contribute to the common good of the citizens' (*Pacem* 27).

At *Pacem* 28 this right to contribute to the common good provides a transition to an outline of duties, which are 'inseparably connected, in the very person who is their subject, with just as many respective duties'. For example, the right to a 'decent standard of living' corresponds to a duty to use one's living for good purposes (*Pacem* 29). As rights are a reflection of duties, duties depend on a political environment where men and women 'enjoy the right to act freely and responsibly' (*Pacem* 34). While Leo XIII's *Diuturnum* of 1881 assumes a hierarchical political authority with paternal duty, *Pacem* assumes a democratic setting where government has representative duties. Like Leo, John XXIII holds that freedom for its own sake is not sufficient; true freedom is directed to good living, the pursuit of truth, and the purposes of the Creator (i.e., natural law). He explains that citizens are called:

(p. 455)

> guided by justice, [to] apply themselves seriously to respecting the rights of others and discharging their own duties… [to be] moved by such fervour of charity as to make their own needs the need of others and share with others their own goods… [and to] work for a closer fellowship in the world of spiritual values.
>
> (*Pacem* 35)

Here, Pope John restates the relationship of love and justice as seen in Leo XIII and especially Pius XI (*Quadragesimo*). But in democratic and representative politics, a citizen's duties of love and justice become even more important.

A new emphasis on the citizen's social role can be seen in differences between Leo XIII (*Diuturnum, Immortale Dei* and *Rerum*) and Pius XI (*Quadragesimo* and *Divini Redemptoris*). Pope Pius develops themes consistent with Leo XIII and the ancient/medieval traditions they share. The overriding concern of the political order, for Leo XIII, is the duty of governments. When society is properly ordered by rulers, the duties of citizens can be adequately described in terms of general justice (giving others their due) and the obligations of legal justice. Pius XI, however, faces a situation where state socialism and state-supported laissez-faire capitalism have challenged local social connections to a degree that they are now identified as having special importance. Pius XI (*Quadragesimo* 88) understands citizens' roles in a just social order as, not merely justice in general or justice according to law, but more distinctively 'social' justice. Social justice is a complement to social charity and attends, not to the relationship between individual citizens (commuta-

tive justice), but to the relationship of individual citizens to the whole—of individual citizens cooperating in groups and associations for the common good.

The requirements of social justice play a role in defining the political order. The political ordering of common life ought to make room for the diverse and numerous contributions that citizens are called to make to the social body. Most clearly in opposition to communism, Pius XI argues that the state ought not to absorb the social roles and duties of its members. In relationship to capitalism and an individualist conception of political order (*Quadragesimo* 78), he opposes the idea that political organization is constituted by the state, on one hand, and individuals with their own self-interests, on the other. The category of social justice requires that we recognize the calling of persons-in-community to the common good. This calling is understood as a person's social function, gift, and service to the whole (Hittinger 2002). It requires governments to step back, make room, and if possible foster various groups and associations that perform necessary social functions and services. Pius XI calls this the principle of subsidiarity (*Quadragesimo* 80). He holds that 'it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do' (*Quadragesimo* 79). The political order is bound to respect, as a matter of justice, the contributions and callings of a complex social body.

The call for social justice and subsidiarity highlights the theme of CST with which this essay began: the priority of the social (in economics and politics) in terms of a body with many parts that work together for the good of the members and the whole. Comment (p. 456) on one last concept—solidarity—will serve as a conclusion. Vatican II's *Gaudium et spes* (*GS* 6, 25, 42, 75) notes frequently the growing importance of what it calls 'socialization'. Socialization is the increasing connectedness and interdependence of people across the globe. Increasing interdependence includes the danger of greater divisions between rich and poor, the centralization of power, and the marginalization of the powerless. It also creates plentiful opportunities for mutual regard and service. John Paul II, in particular, emphasizes the fact that modern forms of travel, communication, commerce, and cultural interchange open routes for personal service to others. This situation of socialization makes the personal character of social charity and social justice all the more important. John Paul II calls us to cultivate habits, in everyday life, of solidarity. It 'is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all' (*Sollicitudo* 38).

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For a list of abbreviations, further details of commonly cited Catholic official documents, and of the works of St Thomas Aquinas, please see the beginning of this volume.

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Catholic Teaching on Politics and the State

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores Catholic teaching on life in the political realm. It explores first how the contours of debate were set in the early Church. Augustine's notion of the two cities' provided a basic foundation for later Latin Catholic thought, presenting the city of God on pilgrimage towards the heavenly city—and yet united already to it as Christ's body. The city of man is founded on humanity's turn away from right desire for God, and it is from within the city of God that we learn to view the relative integrity and value of all other human social order. The middle sections of the chapter explore the development of this vision in the medieval period. Later sections examine transformations across the Reformation period, ending with a treatment of these questions at Vatican II and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Keywords: Aquinas, Augustine, city, freedom, Hobbes, liberty, kingdom, politics, power, state

Introduction

THE ancient classical world understood human beings as 'political animals'. As Aristotle famously wrote, 'man is born for citizenship' (*NE* 1.7; Aristotle 2009: 11). Politics did not name something separate from the social, philosophical, moral and theological beliefs and practices of a people. Politics was the purpose and end of man. Whether Athens, Troy, Sparta, or Rome, the *polis* as well as the *civitates* were understood as comprehensive of the common good, the *res publica.* Plato's *Republic* provided a kind of transcendent term for politics, but this was but a shadowy resemblance of the political transcendence that Christians would propose to the world. This chapter traces the appearance of that Christian proposition from its appearance in the first centuries of the faith through to late modernity. The approach taken is primarily historical, but always with a view to allowing the Church's teaching in this area to appear with clarity. The final section of the chapter offers a brief summary of the *Catechism's* teaching on the state.

Beginnings

From the angelic announcement of his birth to the events leading up to his passion, the narrative of Christ's life is pregnant with political significance and indications of how early Christians understood Jesus' teaching about temporal authority. In one such event Christ famously evades entrapment and sets the parameters for subsequent Christian political reflection with the simple injunction: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's (Matt. 22:21). Here, under the mundane pretext of tax policy, Christ makes a profound distinction between temporal and divine (p. 458) authority and forces the questioners to order themselves to justice—distinguishing that which is due to whom. Christ encourages the payment of the tax at the same time as he refuses the blasphemy. Yet in doing so he also relativizes Caesar, which is to say that he relativizes the rule of the Roman state, and proclaims God's own rule as the comprehensive, transcendent order. In this way, a path is set for recognizing the legitimate claims of the state as well as its limits.

Christ's exchange with Pontius Pilate is also instructive in this regard. Despite the accusations made against Christ—that he was 'subverting our nation', that he 'forbids payment of taxes to Caesar', and 'calls himself Christ the king'—Pontius Pilate finds these charges groundless, replying 'I find no guilt in this man' (Luke 23:2). John's Gospel accentuates Pilate's interest in Christ's claim to kingship—indicating that Pilate found this charge to be the only one worth his time. Yet here again, we find Christ not so much denigrating political rule as pointing to a transcendent politics. In response to Pilate's questioning, Jesus answers 'My kingdom is not from this world' (John 18:26). Alongside Christ's claim to be the source of truth ('everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice'), Christ's claim to a transcendent kingship demonstrated to Pilate's satisfaction that whatever the status of his rule ('king of the Jews'), it was not a 'political' order that threatened the empire as such.

While Pilate 'washes his hands', seeking to cleanse himself from his part in an unjust judgement, Christ was nevertheless crucified on a Roman cross. His resurrection appearances, in which his healed wounds could be touched, his transfiguration, and his ascension into heaven also raised up the faith of the early Church to make disciples of all nations. Preaching 'Christ crucified' would prove especially costly in the first few centuries. Roman rulers would increasingly view Christians as a threat—and history remembers persecutions by the names of emperors to this day (Neronian, Domitian, Decian, Diocletian). After a long period of intermittent persecution, and a strong sense that the state was opposed to the Church, the Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christ sowed the seeds of a new kind of relationship between the Church and the state.

Roman pagans saw Constantine's Christian turn as one which was not strengthening Rome, but sowing the seeds for its destruction, angering the gods of their forefathers. Thus, the Christianization of the empire met with sporadic resistance. The Emperor Julian 'the Apostate', in AD 361 found some popular support for his attempted reversal of his half-brother Constantine's vision. Within two years, however, Julian's suppression of the

Church, as well as his life, came to an end. Shortly thereafter, under the counsel of Bishop Ambrose of Milan (*c.*340–97), Emperor Gratian outlawed the practice of polytheistic civil religion (paganism). In AD 382 the emperor confiscated the temples and properties of pagan priests and vestal virgins, including the altar of victory, a temple at the very heart of the Senate. Gratian gave up the priestly title of *pontifex maximus,* conferring it instead upon Ambrose. Gratian's successor, Theodosius, would continue the purge of paganism, even banning the Olympics as 'pagan games'. It was an indication of the profound turn that Rome had made from pagan to Christian. After Theodosius, the empire was permanently divided between East and West. When we speak today of (p. 459) 'Western civilization', we have in mind the way in which the Western, that is, the Roman, empire gave rise to Europe and the Americas.

Augustine's Two Cities

While Rome had long been threatened by the tribes who lived beyond its European borders, the capture of Rome by the Goths in 410 came as a great shock. Was this event a sign of the Christian God's inability to sustain Rome (as some pagans thought)? How should Christians view Rome in any case? The most significant Christian response to the catastrophe was that penned by Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354–430). It is difficult to overstate the influence of Augustine's *City of God* on Christian political reflection throughout the ages. It constitutes one of the most sustained critical arguments with the classical philosophical, moral, political, and theological traditions of the Roman world at the same time as it provides a comprehensive account of what an ascent to Christ entails for the proper ordering of the world. Augustine's profound argument with Roman culture is often neatly reduced to a description of 'two cities'. It bears repeating, however, that the city of man and the city of God are not two empirical cities—Rome is never identified as the city of man. Nor can it be said that the two cities simply represent the human and the divine. Rather, the two cities have cosmic significance. They are better described as interior dispositions that can be recognized in external acts, which is why Augustine's analysis has universal significance for how the Church understands politics.

Augustine uses the biblically inspired vision of two cities (archetypally Jerusalem and Babylon) to discriminate between different orders of love, orders which have different origins and ends, and while 'commingled' in time, have distinguishable trajectories and destinies. On one level, God is the source for both cities. Nothing exists that was not brought into existence by God 'out of nothing'. But the city of man finds its origin in the absurd angelic and human turn away from God as source and cause of existence. It is really a privation of right order, a privation of the original good, which constitutes an inward turn away from God, a withdrawal from the common good that is God. By contrast, the city of God finds its origin in those holy angels and in those human beings who seek justice and walk humbly with their God.

All the polarities of Augustine's two cities follow from this primordial division stemming from the creation of rational beings, and their prideful turn away from God as their cause.

One city is based on pride, the other on humility. One deceives and flatters, the other seeks truth and understanding. One seeks to order all their loves to the self at the exclusion of God, the other directs all their loves to their own source and end in God. One worships creation, the other worships the Creator. With such conceptual tools for distinguishing between two cities, Augustine is able to identify aspects of each 'city' in Roman history as well as in Israel's history—and even in Christian history. Consistently he brings his analysis back to Jesus Christ as the king of the City of God.

(p. 460) Christ's kingdom is that city on pilgrimage, it is his *mystical body,* united to the heavenly city by the sacrament of the altar which stands as the source and summit of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church proclaimed in the creeds. Augustine strongly identifies the Church with the City of God, but he is also aware of the presence of the city of man—false Christians, false bishops, heretics—in the life of the Church. Such 'schismatics' bear false witness to Christ's body, but they cannot fundamentally threaten the essential unity of the Church as her unity is a gift guarded by apostolic authority and secured by her heavenly communion with Christ who will separate the two cities at the Last Judgement.

This strong vision of the Church as the City of God on pilgrimage renders the Church the most comprehensive order on earth, a claim with breath-taking consequences for Western civilization. Augustine makes crucial distinctions about the pre-political and the supra-political which gives politics what is due to it, which is a much more limited scope than it had under the ancient classical order. He famously distinguishes that which is prior to the political, namely those social relationships that nature engenders, such as the conjugal unions that produce children, and the relationships obtained in families, between neighbours, between classes, and between friendships. Thus, Augustine revises Aristotle's 'man is political by nature' to something more like Thomas Aquinas's claim that 'man is social and political by nature'. This threefold hierarchy—social, political, and ecclesial—sets up the basic presuppositions for medieval Christendom, and in a very different way, the modern political arrangements as well.

The basic structure of the relationship between the Church and politics in Augustine is most clearly seen in *City of God* 19:21–4. Here we see a culmination of an argument that began in *City* 2, namely Cicero's definition of a commonwealth (advanced in the voice of Scipio) as a multitude 'united in association by a common sense of right (*ius*) and a community of interest', where he explains a common sense of right depends on justice. Justice, then, is the foundation of a commonwealth since 'justice is that virtue which assigns to everyone his due', and all rights flow from 'the fount of justice' (*Civ.* 19:21). Augustine uses this argument to the Church's advantage because he carefully shows that Rome has never rendered what is due to God, and therefore it has never been a commonwealth. The justice which is owed to the true God can only be rendered by sacrifice, and the only sacrifice which could be acceptable to God would be a pure, perfect sacrifice which only he could offer. But in fact, by uniting humanity to himself in the Incarnation of his Son, Jesus Christ has become the sacrifice which is due to God. In this way, Augustine shows that only the Catholic Church renders justice to God, and thus only the Church can make the tru-

ly comprehensive commonwealth claim (*societas perfecta*). The great triumph of this argument is to take a profoundly Roman idea about commonwealth, and show that the proper terminus of those claims can only be fulfilled by an order which is in but not of this world. Furthermore, the Church herself, 'we, his City' becomes this sacrifice through 'the mystic symbol of this sacrifice we celebrate in our oblations' (*Civ.* 19:23) That is to say, the Church herself is the source and summit of the true commonwealth because it is constituted by the one true sacrifice, Christ Crucified.

(p. 461) With this comprehensive claim established, however, he must give an alternative, 'scaled' definition of a commonwealth by degrees. This is crucial, since having taken away the Ciceronian definition and reserved it for the Church, readers could get the misimpression that Augustine sees the Church as a replacement for political communities. Instead, what he imagines is a definition that admits of degree: 'an association of rational beings united by a common agreement on the objects of their love' (*Civ.* 19:24). A whole range of possibilities arise now for naming better and worse kinds of political community. As he puts it 'the better the objects of agreement, the better the people; the worse the objects of this love, the worse the people' (*Civ.* 19:24). This fits the overall pattern of relativizing politics to a middle position between the social and ecclesial, and between the natural and the supernatural. The Church remains the only truly comprehensive order, but this does not deny a certain kind of integrity to many kinds of political community. Augustine makes repeated claims that indicate a preference for smaller-scaled polities, and yet he also recognizes that God has used empires for the spread of the Gospel. At times he expresses a kind of preference for monarchy and a preference for Christian kings. He writes:

> We Christians call rulers happy if they rule with justice … if they put their power in the service of God's majesty, to extend his worship far and wide . … if they do not fail to offer to their true God, as a sacrifice for their sins, the oblation of humility, compassion, and prayer. It is Christian emperors of this kind whom we call happy; happy in hope, during this present life, and happy in reality hereafter, when what we wait for will have come to pass
>
> (*Civ.* 5:24).

Yet he also sees that Christian rule is not always possible, and it can go badly as well. As a bishop who intervened in politics when it threatened the unity of the Catholic faith, he also understood that the political order can also be useful to the peace of the Church. Augustine believes that a good commonwealth can take various political forms, but that it cannot be good unless the loves and liberties are rightly ordered to the truth. In this way, all politics is personal for Augustine because politics stem from the interior life of every person in a society. This is why he sees the Church as essential to the flourishing of every commonwealth because it is only through conversion to Christ that the soul, the city, and the cosmos can be purified and perfected for the highest good of every city.

It took time for Augustine's vision to take hold in the West. The Roman Empire slowly imploded from within even as it suffered attacks from without from the north and the east. Some Christians, such as St Benedict of Nursia (480–543), found respite outside the city, founding a religious community that dedicated itself to prayer, work, and the study of the liberal arts, the Scriptures, and the classical works of both pagan and Christian antiquity. Other Christians remained in cities with their bishops, continually bearing witness to a richly ordered communal life which constantly pointed to both the pre-political and supra-political goods of Augustine's vision.

(p. 462) Medieval Christendom

Pope Gregory the Great (Pope 590–604) and Charlemagne (742–814) are two figures illustrative of the centuries-long transition taking place to establish new medieval relationships between the Church and politics. Pope Gregory is often called the last of the Roman popes and the first of the medieval. An Augustinian, with a special devotion to St Benedict, Gregory worked to implement Augustine's vision of the *res publica Christiana,* a vision of the Church as providing the most comprehensive ordering of society, under which a variety of political communities could flourish. Since the Roman Empire had essentially fragmented and splintered into many different kingdoms, when people looked to Rome, the only unified vision came from the Catholics, and especially from the Office of St Peter.

Gregory was instrumental in defining an increasingly centralized understanding of papal power which contrasted with the Roman imperial understanding of power (see Markus 1997). Pope Gregory's idea of power, explicit in the title all popes have used after him, *servus servorum Dei*, or 'servant of the servants of God', was derived from Mark's Gospel: 'whoever would be first among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.' (Mark 10:43–44). The Christian vision of power was not opposed to hierarchy, but it was opposed to what Augustine had called the *libido dominandi*, the lust for dominance. At the moment when the papacy was acquiring power, Gregory was proclaiming that the Christian vision of power meant that it should be put to use in the service of human beings rather than use human beings in the service of power.

There had been Roman emperors such as Constantine and Theodosius, Christian emperors who privileged the Church. But as the empire crumbled, the relationship between the Church and the fractured political order became unclear. When a new king of the Franks emerged who was Christian, and who was rapidly uniting many kingdoms under his rule, it was significant that Pope Leo III should crown him Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in AD 800.

On the high altar, under which the martyred bodies of Saints Peter and Paul lay, Pope Leo celebrated the papal Mass. He then approached a kneeling, prayerful, and reverent Charlemagne (742–814) and anointed him as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. This fit Augustine's vision of the Church as more comprehensive than the empire, but also his vision of what was possible for a political community that humbly acknowledged that the Church belonged to a higher order. Those present reportedly cheered at this crowning

that gave hope for a new order emerging—an order which carefully distinguished that the temporal order would serve to protect the Church, and that the Church in turn would pray for the empire, for Charlemagne, and the spread of a new *pax Romana*, a politics cognizant that it had authority of a higher order.

(p. 463) Investiture Controversy

In the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries Gregory's holy ideal for the papacy was soiled in the highly volatile time of fragmenting empire. Simony—the buying of holy offices—became widespread during this time and had its most debilitating effect on the Holy See itself. Every few years it seemed a new bishop of Rome was being named, and the quick succession of popes saw a rash of egregious official abuses. This decline was further complicated, in the eleventh century by the Great Schism which came as an after-shock of the slow dissolution of the Roman Empire. But it was also an occasion for a thoroughgoing reform of the papacy and an occasion for kingly power to reassert itself in a new way.

The result was an epic conflict between the foremost political authority in Europe, the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV (1050–1106), and Pope Gregory VII (Pope 1073–85), which has come to be called 'the Investiture Controversy' (see Miller 2008). The crisis concerned the power of the pope, who, as vicar of Christ possessed divine authority, to 'invest' authority in others. The pope could invest his own divine authority in the legitimate political authority of emperors, kings, and princes—especially through ritual actions such as crowning or the passing of the baton. This made kings and princes akin to priests and deacons who were authorized or ordained or 'vested' with their authority by virtue of the authority that God had invested in the office of St Peter's successor. In reaction to the papal claims, kings reacted by asserting their own 'divine right' to invest power in local bishops. Since bishops often controlled large regions around major cities, and therefore had powerful control over property, it is easy to understand why medieval kings would want a say in who was appointed. But the controversy over 'investiture' was really not about who appoints who, but rather how the flow of power worked, and how the social whole was thought to be in harmony with the divine will.

Like his namesake, Pope Gregory VII was a superb administrator and sought extensive contact with secular rulers across Europe. He saw the papacy in an increasingly theocratic way, viewing all temporal authority as subject to his office. In continuity with the Augustinian vision, he was simply asserting the freedom of the Church from political manipulation, underscoring the modest role Augustine had given to politics. But he began exercising this power in ways that looked more like the subjugation of kingly power.

The Augustinian narrative had reframed political power as but one modest part of an organic yet hierarchical vision of the whole that placed the City of God as the overarching authority and the Church on pilgrimage as its symbol. For Gregory, this meant that kings should not appoint anyone to any ecclesial office. But Henry IV As Holy Roman Emperor despite his real interest in reform of the Church, was unwilling to part with the rights that he thought were his by divine authority in his own territories, such as the investiture

of bishops. Gregory believed that the papacy had been given a theological (p. 464) mandate to exercise political power for the greatest good, and he strove by his reforms to maintain and strengthen those claims. To the pope, Henry's refusal to give up the right of investiture seemed not only like disobedience but even an inappropriate reach for ecclesial power. It seemed to Pope Gregory that Henry was turning away from the Christian faith and felt the move as an attack upon the supreme rights of his own office. When Henry IV withdrew his allegiance from the pope in 1076, Gregory excommunicated him and withheld absolution until Henry very publicly prostrated himself in repentance, but this was hardly the end of the controversy. Dramatically, Gregory appointed Rudolf of Swabia as an anti-king in opposition to Henry, and, when the latter continued investing his own bishops, Gregory renewed his excommunication in order to preserve the integrity of the Church. At last, Henry retaliated by installing Clement III as an anti-pope and chasing Gregory out of town, but the controversy would not end—even on Gregory's death—but persisted for some forty years and outlived Henry as well.

This controversy raised far more questions than it could answer. Popes would continue to invest kings with power—and kings continued to see it as their privilege to appoint bishops in their lands. But the bigger question was not squarely faced: what sort of power do pope and king have over one another? That is the question of 'Christianity and politics' in the medieval era, the question of how 'power and the holy' relate. Did a pope have the power to depose a king? Is that the sort of power that the pope had at his disposal? Could a king elect his own pope? That there were no easy answers to these questions at the time shows how deeply intermingled were these aspects of medieval society. Though Church and state could certainly be distinguished from one another, there was no neat, simplified 'separation of Church and state' which could be invoked as some paper solution to a real difficulty.

Medieval Developments

It is notable that St Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) was born to a noble family in Roccasecca, situated midway between papal-controlled territory to the north, and territory ruled by the King of Sicily to the south. Having experienced personally the difficulties of living these tensions between pope and king, it is fascinating to see that one of St Thomas's important treatises on the topic was *De Regno,* a letter written in 1267 to the King of Cyprus (probably Hugh II of Lusignan) (see Aquinas 1949). While the authenticity of the latter part of this letter is disputed, Aquinas states very clearly in the first part that the king should be ordered first and foremost to wisdom and the virtues. Aquinas sees the king as having a sacred duty, distinct from the duty of popes, but not at all incompatible with it. That is, Aquinas sees that the king receives his power from God, who is Wisdom, and so it is fitting that he should love wisdom (*philosophia*). On one level this is simply a classical recommendation for the philosopher-king conformed to the acquired virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. On another level this also serves to make (p. 465) political rule dependent on something prior to it, namely nature, and especially human nature. In this way he follows Augustine in referring to humans not simply as being political by

nature, as Aristotle had it, but ‘social and political by nature’. The Wisdom of God remains the ‘end’ of royal power which is tasked with discerning the eternal and natural law when making human laws.

As Thomas states elsewhere, ‘The natural law is promulgated by the very fact that God instilled it into man’s mind so as to be known by him naturally’ (ST I–II, q. 90, a.4, ad. 1). Since the ‘natural law is nothing else than the rational creature’s participation of the eternal law’ (ST I–II, q. 91, a.), it follows that the king is called to the highest mode of participation in the eternal law, namely the wisdom of God. The king must exercise this wisdom with respect to the practical goods concerning his people, and so prudence dictates that the first precept of law will be ‘to do good and avoid evil’. Human laws following this precept are nothing less, in the view of St Thomas, than the earthly enactment of the eternal reason of the Creator and Ruler of the universe (see Aquinas 2009; Budziszewski 2016; Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum* 219).

It is revealing of St Thomas’s whole system that the letter also commends the king of Cyprus ‘to be zealous for better gifts’, and to follow ‘a more excellent way’, namely the holiness that befits a king in the highest way through the infused virtues of faith, hope, and love. Echoing Augustine’s own view regarding kings, this approach ascribes a ‘legitimate autonomy’ to the ruler—who need not be a Christian—while maintaining a certain kind of spiritual supremacy for the pope as the minster of the more comprehensive order.

The break with a medieval way of thinking about Church and politics might be seen quite early, in the fourteenth-century Franciscan thinker, William of Ockham (1285–1347) (see McGrade 1998). Like Aquinas, Ockham was also interested in giving advice to kings about the use of their power to restrain wickedness and to do good. But where Thomas added a recommendation of holiness to wisdom and virtue, William had no interest in commending holiness to the king. He begins to make a distinction between the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ realms. In the internal realm, we find the intention to love God given to us by God; that is the realm of holiness and salvation. Holiness, for Ockham, belongs solely to the interior realm—whereas kings deal with that which is extrinsic and temporal, and thus they rule over an external realm. This view is most readily apparent in Ockham’s heretical view of papal power, which he bifurcates into a spiritual power (which the pope rarely exercises) and his temporal human power (how popes normally exercise their power). To the extent that the pope has external power—power to order public life—it is a power that cannot really be spiritual. The public realm is *not* the proper realm of holiness. Ockham therefore wants to check papal power seriously—in part by strengthening conciliar power, as well as by a new attentiveness to the Catholic faithful as an organic source of ecclesial power. But in checking these ecclesial powers in this way, Ockham also changes the nature of kingship. On the one hand he extends greater powers to kings than previous theologians were happy to do. But on the other hand, Ockham could no longer commend a king to a more excellent way. He sets up a wall between the internal and external realms that makes ‘reason exchange’ between the papal and the political almost impossible.

(p. 466) With William of Ockham, then, we begin to see the emergence of a public realm in which claims about holiness and the love of God aren't native—in which theology strictly speaking doesn't belong. Instead, the kinds of arguments and reasons that belong in public are more pragmatic, even utilitarian: the power and virtue of the ruler are not seen in terms of how they are ordered to transcendent ends, but solely in terms of what is presently necessary and useful to secure the state.

The Protestant Reformation

It is a long walk from Ockham to Martin Luther (1483–1546), let alone to liberal democratic polities, but it is most likely that Luther's critique of the papal power would have looked different if it were not for William of Ockham's intrinsic–extrinsic distinction in his analysis of the will. Not surprisingly, the inner–outer distinction is crucial for Luther too. Luther will also teach that spiritual power attends to that which is interior, and the temporal power attends to that which is exterior. That arrangement was giving way to a more dualistic way of thinking. Thus Luther's *Landskirke* (or notion of a state church) is not so much the organic unity of the medieval arrangement as it is a profoundly bifurcated unity (see Höpfl 1991 for relevant texts of Luther and Calvin).

Over a thousand years of Christian political reflection is reconfigured in the sixteenth century. There were certainly continuities with the medieval understanding. Even the very worldly political philosophies which were developing had ties to the past. Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532), for example, ostensibly stood in 'the mirror of princes' tradition that began with theologians such as Augustine and blossomed into medieval literature with the likes of Thomas Aquinas's *On Kingship* (1267), and Dante's *Monarchia* (1313). Yet the example of Machiavelli also helps us to see how one thinker could use the traditional language of virtue and wisdom to make a decisive break from the patristic-medieval patrimony. Machiavelli could 'love the state more than his own soul' because he understood the state as comprehensive of his own good in a way that previous thinkers had not. *The Prince* is often derided as immoral, and 'Machiavellian' is a term used for attributing vices of deception, yet his text overflows with the language of virtue—virtue reordered to the state as the *summum bonum.*

Yet it was Luther who more effectively moved popular opinion on the relationship between politics and the state. The English historian John Neville Figgis argued that 'it was the function of Luther … to transfer to the State most of the prerogatives that had belonged in the Middle Ages to the Church' (Figgis 2011: 71).

Luther mobilized the masses, especially in lands where the ruling elites were sympathetic to any cause that could draw the Catholic masses into new forms of allegiance. And with the princes who supported the Reformation, Luther challenged medieval conceptions of the papacy. But Luther did not wish to divide the Church, or to demolish the papacy, only to 'reform' it. However, as his reforms met resistance from the very juridical structures of the Church's hierarchy that he sought to reform, he came to believe that (p. 467) the only path to spiritual reform and renewal would be to reject the institutional structures them-

selves, if only for a time. He saw the papacy and council in merely 'external' political-juridical terms, and thus believed that the Church could be itself without these 'externalities'; indeed, Luther thought his rejection of them might reveal a more authentically Christian Church. Thus Luther sought a genuine good: the revitalization of the spiritual life of the Church. However, his mode of achieving this was genuinely destructive—he believed reformation would require that the majority of the medieval external structures, the hierarchy, the sacramental system, the penitential system, would all have to be brought down in favour of a more internalized, spiritualized, and 'democratized' form of Christian life. The theological instrument used for this demolition was 'the priesthood of all believers'.

For John Calvin (1509–1564), Luther's arrangement was too simplistic with regard to institutions, too individualistic with regard to faith, and too pessimistic with regard to the state. A lawyer by training, Calvin saw the law in much more positive terms than Luther did, and thus did not see the state as purely debased. As a result he did not try to drive a wedge between Church and state, and his positive regard for the institutional structures of the Church meant that he did not make a spiritualized Church dependent on a substantialized state.

Partly in reaction to Luther, Calvin was trying to restore the reputation of the political order, and like Catholic theologians before him, he was trying to build bridges between Christian virtues and the civic virtues of the state and society. The term he sometimes used was 'common grace', though much of the thinking amounted to a return to the Christian preference for 'natural law' that had predominated in the medieval period. The great contribution of the Geneva theologian was that he understood that an invisible, mystical unity was not enough, and that visible unity must find support in institutions, offices, doctrines, laws, and ritual action. Calvin saw that Luther's liberation of the individual conscience from external hierarchical or historical authorities overlooked a fundamental need: *a conscience needed a community*.

The value of political unity (across these spheres) especially returns to the fore as Calvin began to absorb political vocabulary back into the liturgical life of the Church. While Luther had tried to strip the Church's liturgical language of all its political significance, Calvin stressed the priority of the Church in forming a politically virtuous people. He believed that good Christians make good citizens and, importantly, he also believed that to be a good citizen is at least halfway to being a good Christian (for any good in one sphere must be at least partially good in every sphere if the good is genuinely common). Thus the relationship between Christianity and politics—the politics of state and civil society—is a complementary one for Calvin.

What is so interesting about Calvin's renovation work is that the shift he makes from individual conscience to collective or communal conscience meant that he had, in fact, returned to the idea of *participation*, or 'incorporation into the body of Christ'. However, once again this participation was no longer focused on what it had meant to participate in the Body of Christ through the Eucharist in the Catholic sacramental framework. Ever the

reformer, Calvin saw participation in terms of participating in the preaching (p. 468) of the Gospel as the good that is common to all. That made preaching central as well as political education in society. For Calvin, participation in the institutions of state and civil society were also spheres in which God was sovereign, and thus, since all authority was ordained by the Word of God, participation in the state and civil society could be understood as profoundly compatible. Calvin sought to recover a society that could be at once well ordered, disciplined, and cohesive, but *without any visible head* (i.e. without a pope). The Word of God alone could be authoritative, making the preaching of the Word of God absolutely central, moving the sermon, rather than the Eucharist, to the centre of worship.

In sum, Calvin saw the Word of God as the source of authority not only for the Church, but also for state and society. All persons of authority were ministers of this Word. Politicians in Europe are often called 'ministers of state' precisely because of a Calvinistic preference for seeing state officeholders as parallel to ministers of God's Word, only in a different sphere. The unity, the cohesion of the society, would not be held together by a pope, or an emperor, or even by the Eucharist—the unity and cohesion that Calvin sought were a complex unity dependent upon mass participation in a political and social order that was part of the divine order of God's Word. If Luther's theology had made Christians more dependent upon the visibility of state structures, then Calvin's theology served to catalyse Christian masses for social action, and as the primary shapers of institutions of state and economy for the sake of the common good (see the classic argument of Weber 2002).

A couple of generations after Luther and Calvin, the political philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) would also attempt a complex arrangement between Church, society, and state, to a different effect, but one made possible by debates amongst the reformers about how to reimagine the relationship between Christianity and politics. The Hobbesian relationship between the masses and the state is different from Calvin's idea, not least because of their differing historical contexts. Thomas Hobbes's most famous work, *Leviathan,* was written in 1651 at the end of bloody and chaotic civil wars in England, and it offered a vision of how to restore peace and tranquillity in troubled times (for the text and introduction see Hobbes 1996). At bottom, Hobbes lived in a world of fear. The 'wars of religion' that he had observed gave rise to the thought that humans were not only, as Aristotle believed, political animals, they were also *violent animals*. Hobbes's view of human nature was a caricature of the Calvinistic doctrine of the total depravity of man, prone to quarrel; as Hobbes put it, 'every man, against every man'. Perhaps his view of human nature was just what he had observed about human life in his day: 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'.

It is often said that Hobbes's *Leviathan* gives us a window on his time, but as we have said, he also gives us a window on a political model that had *already emerged*, a new model for the relation of Christianity and politics that he was articulating for an English audience in the seventeenth century. What we should especially notice is the *theological* change that has occurred.

This change is strikingly apparent if we pay careful attention to the image of the Sovereign (Leviathan) that appeared as a woodcut on the first edition of his 1651 (p. 469) publication. If we look closely, we will see that this image perfectly represents his view that human nature is violent, and that the 'natural' conflict of humanity can only be averted if everyone makes a pact, gives the consent of their will, gives up some of their individual freedom to a sovereign power in order to enforce laws that will promote peace. The image is headed by a scriptural text, from Job 41:24: 'there is no power above the earth which compares to you'. Under the scriptural text there is the sovereign king, crowned, with a sword in his right hand, and what could be either a sceptre (royal) or a crosier (ecclesiastical) in his left hand. The viewer can see the body of the sovereign from the waist up, and on close inspection the sovereign is clothed or constituted by hundreds of tiny people. It is a striking and unexpected image to see one human being made up of hundreds of others, but there it is in its entirely bizarre seventeenth-century splendour. On closer inspection still, the viewer of the woodcut sees only the backs of the tiny bodies of the people. In other words, all of the bodies are facing Leviathan. It is the image one would have had walking into a local parish and seeing the backs of the worshippers facing Christ on the cross. The body politic is in perfect obedience to the sovereign, an obedience that people would have learned first in Church, now being transferred to, in Hobbesian terms, 'a mortal god'.

With bloodshed all around him, it is hardly surprising that Hobbes hoped for some 'real and present' saviour in a strong, sovereign political body which he calls Leviathan: 'a common power to keep them all in awe'. John Locke (1632–1704) can be seen as softening the Hobbesian social contract precisely by limiting government, but many of the same impulses for absorbing the Church that one can see in Hobbes can be seen throughout the limits which Lockean liberalism places on the Church's authority.

Counter-Reformation

There were strong local resistances to these modern political shifts, and there were also discriminating Catholic responses to the new nation states. Proponents of an older understanding had strong counter-arguments to offer Protestant thinkers. All Catholics agreed that civil, temporal power had a divine origin. But against the Hobbesian claim to absolute sovereignty, Catholic thinkers provided a strong counter-claim that while the state had no authority over religious matters, it could act authoritatively in religious matters on behalf of the Church.

This raised a question of how the Church and state were related to one another. The question was whether that authority would be transmitted immediately through the Church, or mediately, which is to say indirectly. Notable among those who argued the latter was Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, S.J. (1542–1621). Not all in the Curia were attracted to his view that papal supremacy was primarily spiritual, and did not concern temporal authority except indirectly. As a result, some saw him as conceding too much to the emerging claims of nation states, but his positions were traditionally argued. In the tradition of Au-

gustine, Bellarmine taught that the Church was a *res publica Christiana* (p. 470) and a *societas perfecta* (see Augustine, *civ.* 19:23) that enveloped all commonwealths without ever usurping their legitimate autonomy and jurisdiction (see Augustine, *civ.* 19:24). In the tradition of Aquinas, Bellarmine taught that while monarchy was best in principle, a mixed regime provided the necessary checks against corruption and abuse of temporal authority. Bellarmine's preference for a mixed regime would mean that every prince should receive his power directly from the people *(ex universo populo)* and indirectly from God *(vox populi, vox Dei)*. However, Bellarmine's critics worried that this would strip the papacy of authority over temporal affairs. Yet Bellarmine insisted that this papal authority over temporal matters remained precisely through his doctrine of indirect power. The power of the Catholic laity over temporal affairs meant that the pope retained an indirect power insofar as he remained the chief authority in matters pertaining to faith and morals.

Many other Counter-Reformation Catholic writers, such as Francisco Vitoria (1492–1546), Francisco Suarez (1548–1617), and Bartolome de Las Casas (1484–1566), made significant contributions to important political questions. For example, Las Casas would argue that the Spanish state had a duty to respect the rights of the Native American Indians precisely because they were created in God's image (Gutiérrez 1993). The Western tradition of acknowledging 'rights and duties' owes a great deal to this Counter-Reformation period in which Catholic thinkers helped provide moral guidance to newly expanding state power.

The Catholic Church in the Modern World

The Catholic Church began to face increasing hostilities in nations which it had once formed and nurtured in the Christian faith. France was one such daughter of the Church that sought to expunge religion from public life and severely limit its free exercise. At the same time, Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–59) marveled that the American Revolution provided a unique experiment in democracy that afforded the Catholic Church a good deal of freedom, a doctrine enshrined in the First Amendment of the US Constitution's 'free exercise of religion'.

For many other Western nations the principle that each prince should chose his own religion remained the default position for liberal orders. The Church of England, the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Dutch Reformed Church are all examples of this trend. While the anti-religious zeal of the Enlightenment sometimes flared up in dramatic ways (as in France), it could also manifest itself in established religion (always Protestant, often vaguely instituted). This constituted a new kind of religious liberty predicated on the new liberal virtue of 'toleration'. While it was better to be tolerated than persecuted, it was clear that the Catholic Church was in a new situation vis-à-vis the state. By the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church was seeking to reverse this trend.

(p. 471) It was a trend that the Catholic Church opposed because it understood that this was a false kind of 'religious liberty' built upon the premise of 'religious indifferentism'. The popes understood that letting the prince, or the people, choose their religion could

only mean that religion was not a matter of truth or falsehood, but a matter of power and desire. In this sense, the Catholic Church opposed not a general principle of 'religious liberty' but the culture of relativism that was quickly arising in which it was becoming fashionable to claim that the truth about religion, natural or revealed, could not be known. It is this view of religious liberty that popes in the nineteenth century consistently condemned because it sought to uphold a positive view of liberty ordered to truth and goodness, not indifference and toleration.

Religious Liberty

For example, Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Immortale Dei* (1885) continues to reject such principles, stating that rulers cannot simply choose 'out of the many forms of religion' the one that 'pleases them' nor can a ruler, as he argues in *Libertas,* simply treat all religions alike or 'bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges'. This is because religion concerns the truth about God, whose existence can be known by reason, and the justice owed to God, which concerns worship that must be pure from all idolatry.

It is against this conflict that we must consider the Second Vatican Council not only as a renewal of the Church's teachings, but also a reform of this enduring conflict with the modern liberal political order. To examine this reform, many scholars look to the most controversial document of the Second Vatican Council: *Dignitatis humanae.* There is probably no document that more clearly marks a shift in thinking about the Church's relationship to modern states than *Dignitatis humanae.* The Council wanted to show that it could find positive elements in modernity, and so instead of merely condemning the errors of the modern liberal order, it sought a dialogue with what was good in it. Thus:

> This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits
>
> (*DH* 2).

To some interpreters, this new teaching seemed to contradict the earlier teaching which had denied absolute personal liberty.

The English philosopher Thomas Pink has argued, however, that *Dignitatis humanae* does not represent a break with the principles that guided earlier papal teaching on questions of liberty and conscience (Pink 2013). The pre- and post-conciliar teachings both stressed the distinction between the two powers, ecclesiastical and civil, one set over the salvation of souls and the other over temporal affairs. In this way, Pink sees that (p. 472) there is a right to religious liberty in temporal affairs which leaves intact the Church's earlier teaching about the freedom of the Church, which must include the freedom to form the baptized, and when necessary, with the assistance of temporal power. This is actually a

way of seeing religious liberty working at different levels, not unlike the way in which Augustine identifies the order of the Church as the *societas perfecta* in which all our loves and liberties are properly ordered to truth and goodness, and lower orders of state and civil society, where religious liberty is intended to protect the spiritual power from worldly power. Such debates about religious liberty help us to see the fundamental question about the relation of the Church and politics concerns the dignity of man's transcendent end. The first paragraph of *Dignitatis humanae* captures it this way: 'Religious freedom … which men demand as necessary to fulfill their duty to worship God, has to do with immunity from coercion in civil society. Therefore it leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ' (*DH* 1).

Conclusion

The Augustinian ideal remains. Clear evidence for this statement can be found in the treatment of the state in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* 'The human person needs to live in society' (*CCC* 1879), society is a requirement that enables and forms the context for human beings to live out their vocations. And societies require appropriate authority for them to function (*CCC* 1898). Yet, some forms of society also present a significant danger; the state may inappropriately interfere with the exercise of human freedom. And thus, just as God allows to humanity the freedom to exercise the capacities natural to it, so too the state should allow the communities within its sway appropriate freedom of action in the spheres that are theirs—the principle of subsidiarity (*CCC* 1883–4). Similarly, the Church calls on all societies to serve 'the common good'—which involves respect for the person as such, the social well-being and development of those in society, and the nurturing of peace, stability and security (*CCC* 1905–12, 2304ff, on respect for persons see also *CCC* 2273). But the notion of the common good, again in Augustinian fashion, calls society to recognize that the common good proceeds when the interaction of truth and love is recognized and the continual conversion of people towards just action is promoted (*CCC* 1912 and 1916). Similarly, the true exercise of authority stems from recognition of the divine origin of all authority, and requires of those in authority recognition of the natural law, the dignity of persons, and the nature of justice (*CCC* 2235–7).

This call for society to attend to the common good finds a parallel in the duties attendant upon citizens. 1 Peter 2:13 tells us 'live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God'. Christians must, hence, contribute fully to their societies, yet ready to voice criticisms of that which harms the person or the common good. This call for us to be ready to voice criticism demands of (p. 473) the Christian readiness to speak as a Christian on some of the most controversial issues of our day. Thus, for example, the *Catechism* insists that '[t]he more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the *foreigner* in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin' (*CCC* 2241). Similarly,

'civil authority should consider it a grace duty "to acknowledge the true nature of marriage and the family …" ' (*CCC* 2210).

In 2002 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a 'doctrinal note' 'On Some Questions Concerning the Participation of Catholics in Political Life' (CDF 2002). While recognizing that democracy 'is the best expression of the direct participation of citizens in political choices' the text explores with great insight the dangers of a vision of democratic pluralism that equates pluralism and relativism. Only a polity founded on a correct understanding of the human person can prosper and promote the well-being of its citizens.

The highest order of love a polity can recognize is true religion. In this sense, the Catholic Church can do no less than to prefer any politics which recognizes true religion and the freedom of the Church. It does not, however, have any particular political form to recommend. The Church can recognize the good in monarchy, aristocracy, and different forms of democracy, or more typically in mixed regimes, as long as those regimes serve the common good of those over whom they find themselves (*CCC* 1901). In addition to seeing clearly the common good in any regime, the Church also has prophetic insight into what disorders the loves of people, and so can heal and elevate civil societies by bearing witness to the truth. As Augustine understood, political communities can be better or worse according to the order of their loves and their liberties. This is as inevitable for polities as it is for human persons, and the families which constitute the civil societies out of which states arise, and to which they have a duty to protect from evil, and to make virtue easier to pursue. When the loves of a people become very disordered, the quality of their polity will decline with it. The converse is also true, and ascending loves and liberties find their terminus in the knowledge and love of God.

At the heart of Catholic political thought is the hypostatic union of Christ's two natures, fully human and fully divine. God has united humanity to himself in a new way in the incarnation of God the Son. Humanity which is ordered to him will be lifted up, and so will states which recognize Christ and his Church. Christ definitively reveals the goodness of human nature, and thus the goodness of ordering it well, protecting it, providing laws which preserve and serve the human family which has the *Imago Dei* at its heart. The Catholic Church thus sees a nobility in political order, and recognizes in it a legitimate autonomy. The autonomy of the state is legitimate to the extent that it understands what precedes its power, and also what exceeds it. To the extent that states fail to recognize that they serve the common good of the civil society, to the extent they fail to recognize the natural law and right reason, and to the extent they fail to provide freedom for natural and supernatural virtues, they demonstrate a loss of their legitimacy. The Church remains a sanctuary at the heart of every polity, even polities which demonstrate their disorder by persecuting the Church. As with Christ's two natures, the Church unites the human family to God in the Eucharist. In doing so, she proposes a kingdom that is not of this world that can heal and elevate every nation. At the heart of the relationship between the Church and politics is prayer. In every place, the Church (p. 474) prays for the people, for

political rulers, for virtue and wisdom, and that all would come to follow ‘the more excellent way’.

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Origen and Augustine

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Abstract and Keywords

At the foundation of Catholic theology are to be found Origen of Alexandria and Augustine of Hippo. They are so foundational not, most importantly, because of their positions on particular theological questions, but because of their conception of theological thinking itself. Both articulate accounts of the role of attention to Scripture and the use of philosophical reasoning that are formative in the centuries that follow. Both thinkers were original geniuses who also represent the approach of earlier Christian traditions. Widespread controversy over Origen's thought throughout the Christian world means that Augustine's conception of theology can also be understood as something of a corrective to his predecessor (even if this is often unconscious).

Keywords: Origen, Augustine, Scripture, philosophy, theology, allegory, literal sense

ORIGEN of Alexandria (*c.*185-*c.*254) and Augustine of Hippo (354-430) are foundational for later Catholic theology. They are foundational because of their positions on a variety of theological questions, but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, because of their conception of theological thinking itself. Together they articulate an account of the role of attention to Scripture and the use of philosophical reasoning that would be formative for the centuries that follow. However, two provisos are necessary. In the first case, both thinkers were not only original geniuses, but also mediators of earlier Christian traditions. They articulated with particular clarity and vision approaches that most of their peers would have recognized as the common practice of Christian thinkers. In the second place, because Origen was a controversial figure, Augustine may be read as a partial (if sometimes unconscious) corrective to Origen even as he pursues very similar lines of thought. Various other chapters within the volume discuss their opinions on particular theological topics; my focus here will be to sketch something of their shared vision of what it is to think theologically so that its significance for the subsequent history of Catholic theology maybe more clearly grasped.

Origen and the Shape of Christian Thinking

Origen of Alexandria is a figure loved openly by theologians at different periods in the Church's history, and loved in secret at others. As well as admirers, he has always had detractors; he seems to have come under suspicion during his lifetime, and within fifty years of his death there was a well-developed literature arguing that various aspects of his thought were heretical. In the late fourth century a fairly widespread conflict over the interpretation of his works erupted, and in the sixth century some aspects of his thought taken to be heretical were formally condemned at an ecumenical council. (p. 482) And yet, during his lifetime he was also called upon as a theological 'expert' around the Mediterranean and, in the centuries that followed, his works were an inspiration for many (for Origen's life and works see Heine 2010; Crouzel 1989; and McGuckin 2004). During the Middle Ages, when a great deal of his corpus in Greek was lost, much was preserved in Latin under various other names. From the Renaissance onwards he has been subject to continuing critiques and yet often simultaneous revivals. Since the mid-twentieth century his star has risen to heights perhaps not seen since antiquity.

In an introductory discussion of Origen as interpreter one might expect to see a discussion of 'allegory' appearing pretty quickly; this is, after all, a feature of his thought that has been controversial since the third century. But before I allow that discussion out of the bag it is important to think about the techniques Origen used to read Scripture at the literal level. It is here that we can see the full flowering of a significant shift that had been underway since the middle of the second century.

Origen used reading techniques that had been developed within ancient traditions of literary commentary and which were, by his time, taught to young students by the 'grammarian' (an excellent summary of Origen's relationship to these practices is Martens 2012: 41–66; more broadly see Irvine 1994). The grammarian taught basic techniques for textual articulation and study. I say 'textual articulation' because texts were presented without spacing or punctuation, and were copied by hand—which often led to mistakes being incorporated—not least in manuscripts of the Scriptures (to say nothing of mistakes and ambiguities introduced when translations were produced and copied). Students learned to read aloud, separating words as they went. The grammarian would comment on the language and terminology used, showing students by example what was considered appropriate grammatical form. The very texts that were chosen for commentary also served to inculcate a particular moral vision. In this sense, the grammarian's teaching served a key role in perpetuating the cultural values of the communities in which it was found.

The grammarian also taught basic techniques of analysis and composition. From Egypt we have a good deal of papyrological evidence that enables us to see the sort of exercises in composition that students were assigned (see Morgan 1998). The sort of textual analysis taught by grammarians involved bringing to bear a great deal of knowledge—philological, literary, historical, mythical, and scientific—on the text to illustrate the meaning of terms, historical allusions, the plausibility of narratives, and scientific claims. Obviously,

what was taught at an introductory level differed considerably from the range of material that could be deployed in more advanced commentary. But, at all levels, when assessing the meaning of terms, much emphasis was placed on examining how a particular term was commonly used throughout a text, and on the broader history and common usage of a term. These procedures, when applied to the Christian Scriptures, would obviously have significant consequences—not least bolstering and giving more form to the principle that the Scriptures were a unity.

These techniques were the basis of all ancient literary culture—they were the foundation for the analysis and composition of texts one would have learned at the hands of the teacher of rhetoric, and anyone else who handled texts, from lawyers to philosophers (p. 483) made use of them. Ancient techniques of logic and dialectic—with which Origen was familiar—involved the use of skills far beyond those possessed by the average grammarian, and yet they also were in continuity with the basic tools of division and categorization taught at that introductory level. Grammarians and philosophers, for example, when commenting on a text, would frequently engage in practices of cataloguing and definition. The grammarian might identify five ways a word was commonly used in order to select one meaning as most appropriate for a given usage; the philosophical commentator might also catalogue five ways a term—such as ‘cause’ or ‘generation’—was used and defined in philosophical traditions in order to interpret a term in a text, or to propose a sixth possibility previously unnoticed. For a philosophically educated commentator such as Origen this was one way in which philosophical material was an essential tool in teasing out the meaning of Scripture.

It was natural that Christians would read their own texts using these techniques, but the manner in which they did so resulted from particular Christian concerns and identity-defining controversies in the second half of the second century. In response to a range of other ways of proceeding (particularly against those Gnostics whom modern scholars draw together as ‘Valentinians’), figures such as Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian in Carthage, developed earlier Christians’ piecemeal usage of grammatical reading techniques. They shaped a far more integrated vision in which what would gradually come to be termed the ‘New Testament’ was seen as a textual unity alongside and in union with the body of the ‘Old Testament’. The text of the ‘New’ was now to be read and analysed with the care and closeness previously visited upon the ‘Old’. The work of ‘analysing’ was to be conducted with a range of grammatical techniques, which promoted careful attention to the overall thrust and plot of the text (its *hypothesis*), careful attention to the ways in which key vocabulary was used within the Sscripture as a whole, and a fundamental priority given to the basic sense of the words on their face—the ‘literal’ sense of the text. None of this prevented Christian exegetes engaging in figurative, allegorical reading to different degrees, but it did mean that the fundamental story of the one God’s work in creating and redeeming could be known from the literal sense—Gnostic attempts to read even the elements of this basic story allegorically were disallowed a priori.

The development of this vision of what it meant to think scripturally was interwoven with the development of the Christian scriptural canon. Developing a canon of Scripture involved not only increasing clarity about which books Christians should treat as their 'New Testament', it also involved the emergence of an agreed method for reading those texts and thus for giving their authority a practical form. Saying that a text is authoritative in general does not answer the question of the form that authority should take: once we know that we are to attend carefully to its letters, trying to (initially) interpret the meaning of terms according to their common usage—and their usage within that text, and once we know that the meaning we might come to in this way is then binding on us—once we have this system in place we can answer much more clearly the question 'what does it mean for that text to be authoritative?'. Of course, agreement on a set of reading techniques does not result in every interpreter reading texts in the same way, (p. 484) disputes over interpretation are inevitable. But this agreement does result in notions of what counts as good and bad argument gradually becoming institutionalized.

Thus, in all of this Origen is not really so much the innovator as the inheritor and perfecter of an intellectual culture developed as he was himself growing up and learning his trade as an intellectual. Origen himself is a particularly interesting figure in these developments because while he was eventually ordained in Caesarea in Palestine, and seems to have previously worked in Alexandria in close relationship with the emerging hierarchy of the Church, he also had a wealthy patron who provided him with the resources to devote himself to intellectual activities. Origen may also have had a first-class philosophical education. Previous Christian writers (especially Justin Martyr) had seen themselves inheriting the mantle of the ancient philosophical teacher, whereas Origen was able to bring this to a new level and develop a complex vision of the Christian intellectual as exegete and philosopher. In his extensive apologetic response to Celsus, a pagan critic of Christianity from an earlier generation, Origen makes the argument that disagreements among Christians are to be expected: any groups who study texts closely and with real philosophical skill naturally find themselves falling into dispute (see *cels.* 3.12–13)! In making this argument Origen is trying to show that Christian intellectual culture is every bit as serious as that of non-Christian philosophy. Origen conceives the task of the Christian philosopher as attending to that which has been revealed and in its light sifting what human beings have learned in order to develop an ever more comprehensive vision of the truth.

And yet, this vision—which certainly endorses speculative thinking as something called for (not just mandated by) God's mode of revealing—is also governed by the assumption that the virtues, especially humility, are prerequisites for knowledge of God, and that this search for knowledge is part of an ascent towards unity with God. That path may involve suffering, it may involve opposition to the ways of the world, and it should never involve a rejection of the simple faith of those with fewer intellectual gifts (for Origen's theological vision of scholarship see especially Martens 2012: ch. 4–5). Indeed, it is also important to note that Origen sees the Christian interpreter's basic guide to the meaning of the Scriptures to be the Church's inherited faith, the rule or rules of piety and faith handed down to us by previous generations (see esp. *Princ.* 1, *prol.*).

Origen and Augustine

We have already begun to discuss an aspect of Christian interpretation and thinking that Origen thought to be at the very heart of his tradition, searching for Scripture's deeper senses. Origen sees Scripture as addressing audiences on a continuum. Scripture addresses those who require a simple clear message—and a message that, even when speaking of the divine, uses the categories of time, materiality, and space that we recognize. But Scripture also addresses those who are able to see that sometimes Scripture speaks in terms that are analogous to the experience we have of the visible created world, but which in reality also invite us to see how they speak of a reality that is beyond them. These people are growing into a deeper contemplation of the truth. Thus, when Scripture speaks of God 'repenting' or of God as 'spirit', Origen assumes that the skilled interpreter will know that God does not literally repent and that God is spirit in the sense of being immaterial and intelligible.

(p. 485) From here it is only a few steps to Origen's conception of figurative reading. Precision in terminology here is difficult to achieve. Many modern commentators use a distinction between 'allegory' and 'typology' but this distinction is not present in Origen's works. Origen uses a range of terms to talk about what we might call first the 'higher' meaning of Scripture. Origen believed that the Hebrew Scriptures are best understood in the light of the revelation that is Christ and his teaching. This practice has a number of dimensions, each of which find precedents in earlier Christian literature even as Origen offers a dense version of them all that is the result of his own integrative theological vision. He frequently interprets the prophetic texts of the inherited Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament as fulfilled by Christ and the life of the Church. He also reads other sections of those texts, such as historical and poetic texts, as speaking of Christ—or *also* of Christ. Many texts also are read as having a higher meaning that speaks of the history of the Church and the nature of Christian life (on the relationship between allegory and history see especially Dawson 2002. On Origen's allegorical reading see also Lubac 2007). It is in his extended allegorical readings of Old Testament texts as discussions of Christian life that we see the full flowering of a mode of exegesis seen only piecemeal before him.

Thus, for example, his series of homilies on Exodus treat every detail of the text as speaking about some element of the Christian life; as the Israelites went from Egypt, so Christians are drawn and educated and shaped away from the world and towards the kingdom of God. In the homilies Origen insists that this style of reading is that which discovers why the text has been preserved for us:

> … we who have learned that all things which are written are written not to relate ancient history, but for our discipline and use, understand that these things which are said also happen now not only in this world, which is figuratively called Egypt, but in each of us also
>
> (Origen, *Hom Ex.* 2.1; Origen 1982: 240).

For Origen, the true purpose of the text is not to convey the history of Israel—although it certainly does so—but to provide a text to help us meditate on the nature of divine reality, the Incarnation, and the character of Christian life. The very events of Israel's history are

designed as a series of signs that we now understand as also being about our own interior lives.

It might seem circular to read the text to find in it a conception of Christian life already known. But that would be to misunderstand the nature of the exercise. For Origen we attend to Scripture not only to decode a meaning, but to exercise the mind to better understand and appreciate the character of reality, and to shape our desire towards God. Scripture has been given to us to serve this end. And yet, at the same time, this act of meditating upon the text can provide an ever deeper understanding of the Christian life; working through the details of the text may bring out for us new details, emphases, and connections.

Throughout these homilies and elsewhere, one way in which Origen justifies his reading strategies is to point to ways in which the text fails to present convincing (p. 486) history if read only from this angle. Where the text appears to be historical and yet offers us contradiction or incoherence, Origen sees the text as itself indicating to us that we should read it figuratively. In other contexts Origen simply claims that the whole text is both a drama given to us by Solomon, and yet is full of symbolic language. Readers who are still at the stage of needing the ‘milk’ of initial instruction will simply miss much; only those who have gone on to Paul’s ‘solid food’ will be able to penetrate its mysteries.

Origen offers us a holistic vision of Christian thinking and intellectual life, focusing around the reading of Scripture and leading the contemplative mind towards God, and yet a process that is also deeply shaped by God’s providential care for us. The context for our reading is the Christian life, the virtues of the interpreter are those of the Christian, and the fundamental key to grasping what the Scriptures say is the basic confession of the Church’s inherited faith.

Origen: Disputed Questions

Throughout this chapter I have focused on the conception of theological argument that one finds in Origen and Augustine, but it is important also to offer a few comments on some of the theological questions on which Origen’s positions were deeply influential. I will mention four (further discussion maybe found in Heine 2010; Crouzel 1989; and Edwards 2002). The first three are his possible teaching that the creation is eternal, his conception of universal salvation (*apokatastasis*), and his understanding of how souls fell from contemplation of God. In each case we meet positions that stem from Origen’s speculative attempts to advance on questions that he takes previous interpreters to have left undecided. In each case we face a constant in the study of Origen’s most controversial opinions: the difficulty of knowing what he actually said. In some cases, the strongest texts arguing for these controversial opinions come in out-of-context quotations from Origen and even from summaries of his positions offered by his opponents. It is not likely that all of these are trustworthy. Because of the controversy about his work, much of his corpus is lost, or known only in Latin translations done by those trying to defend him (especially Rufinus of Aquileia)—those who confess they have sometimes altered passages to

make clearer his meaning—and thus we sometimes possess a sanitized text that hides as much as it reveals.

It is noteworthy, however, that the three areas in which Origen's thought came under question all stem from his attempts to offer a systematic vision of the whole of cosmic history and to flesh out—at either end, as it were—the story that Christianity tells. This may well be because he wrote against a background of continuing dispute over 'Gnostic' theologies, almost all of which seem to have offered strongly competing accounts of the origin of the created order and of salvation. It may also be that Origen saw part of his life's work as offering a systematic account of themes that had been treated only piecemeal by his forebears.

(p. 487) The fourth theme in Origen's theology that demands brief mention is his Trinitarian theology. A number of different controversies shaped Origen's accounts of the relationships between Father, Son, and Spirit. One of the most important concerns the complex phenomenon that modern scholars have called Monarchianism. 'Monarchians' were those within the Christian community who saw themselves as upholding the monarchy or sole rule of the Father. Origen was also opposed to 'Gnostic' thinkers who incorporated Christian language into complex mythologies in which divine realities unfolded in a complex chain. In response to these challenges Origen insisted that Father, Son, and Spirit were three irreducible realities—he used the term *hypostases* that would eventually become a standard Greek term for this purpose—and explored a number of ways to speak of the Son as one with the Father. Origen's conception of the Spirit is difficult to pin down. He speaks fairly consistently of the Spirit as 'participating' in holiness, and as pouring out that holiness on the saints, that is, in the Christian community. Later, after the controversies of the fourth century that defined classical Trinitarian belief, this picture of the Spirit as 'participating' in higher realities will be unacceptable (and will be edited out of some of Origen's works). And yet, Origen's experimental Trinitarian theology provided inspiration for all sides in the fourth-century Trinitarian controversies, and enables us to identify him as one of the great architects of classical Trinitarian expression.

Augustine of Hippo

Few figures in Christian history have been as influential as Augustine—St Thomas Aquinas is the obvious competitor, but one need not go far in reading Thomas to see his frequent appeal to Augustine. And yet there is something odd about Augustine's authority. Augustine did not have Origen's high level of philosophical education, nor his predecessor's desire to offer a systematic and consciously scholarly exposition of Christian teaching and the whole of the Christian Scriptures. Like Bl. Cardinal Newman, many of the great works of his corpus were the product of polemical battles. In his writings he is frequently experimental and rarely demonstrates any deep knowledge of contemporary Greek theology. His education was that of a Latin orator; in almost all else he was self-taught (for Augustine's life see the biographies of Brown 2000 and Lancel 2002. For an introduction to his thought see Harrison 2000 and the edited companions Vessey 2012 and

Meconi and Stump 2014). And yet, his deep intellectual gifts, and the sheer range of his corpus, helped him to become one of the great authorities for subsequent Latin theology. Augustine's monastic community also played a role in his rise to prominence: his work was assiduously promoted after his death by those who had known him, and they did so at a time when the Latin world was taking an increasingly distinct path from the Greek.

Despite some attempts to argue for a deeper relationship, the vast majority of scholars argue that Augustine knew little of Origen's corpus. And yet, there are important (p. 488) continuities between their accounts of the character of theology. In parallel with Origen, Augustine's conception of the task of scriptural interpretation involved the use of grammatical techniques to analyse the text. He himself had been trained by grammarians and teachers of rhetoric and knew those practices very well. Augustine's famous *On Christian Teaching* (*De Doctrina Christiana*) shows well the importance he placed on these techniques.

In Book 2 Augustine provides an outline of the various skills required for the interpretation of signs (more precisely, 'unambiguous signs'). He focuses on the sorts of knowledge and skills that we would expect from one with a good grammatical education. Augustine recommends a good knowledge of the Scriptures themselves (*doc.* 2.8.12.24), a knowledge of languages, and the importance of knowing how to compare manuscripts to assess translations *(doc*. 2.12.17.34ff.). It is also helpful to have in place a knowledge of numbers and music. Knowledge of history is also of immense importance (*doc.* 2.28.42.105ff), and logic is chief among the skills that one should cultivate as an interpreter (*doc.* 2.31.48.117ff.). By understanding logic one can grasp the 'network of muscles' that lie beneath the surface of Scripture (*doc.* 2.39.59.143; Augustine 1995: 125). In philosophical terms, one should be willing to use what the Platonists say, when it does not conflict with Christian belief (*doc.* 2.40.60.144). In his practice Augustine displays many of the same techniques as Origen, though with less concern to show the reader his scholarly skill (probably because he wrote far less that is formal commentary), and with a far greater attention to rhetorical tropes and figures (which is not surprising, given the shape of his education).

In this discussion Augustine shows himself walking a tightrope; he sees the educational culture of his day as in some ways necessary for the precise interpretation of the Scriptures, and yet he also sees that culture as seductively imparting a false morality and false objects of desire. Thus, Augustine devotes a good deal of space in Book 2 to the dangers of being led astray by the myths contained in pagan learning and of being drawn to an excessive cultivation of those ancient disciplines themselves:

> … all the branches of pagan learning contain not only false and superstitious fantasies and burdensome studies that involve unnecessary effort, which one of us must loathe and avoid as under Christ's guidance we abandon the company of pagans, but also studies for liberated minds which are more appropriate to the service of the truth … These treasures—like the silver and gold, which they did not create but dug, as it were, from the mines of providence, which is everywhere—

> which were used wickedly and harmfully in the service of demons must be removed by Christians, as they separate themselves in spirit from the wretched company of pagan, and applied to their true function, that of preaching the gospel
>
> (*doc.* 2. 40.60.145; Augustine 1995: 125).

As Augustine makes clear a few sentences earlier, the gold and silver of which he speaks here is an allusion to the taking of Egyptian treasure by the departing Israelites (Exod. (p. 489) 3 and 12). However Augustine came himself by the image, his use of this example is similar to Origen's use of the same (for Origen's version see Gregory 1998: 190ff). The distinctive note is perhaps Augustine's concern that his readers are not only encouraged to see the importance of these disciplines as a framework for Christian thought, but that they are also equally strongly warned against being too drawn by the enticements and distractions they offer. The whole section of Book 2 that I have discussed here is framed by an account of seven stages we must take towards wisdom (which is itself the seventh stage). The third stage, knowledge (within which we find all that I have discussed here) comes only after the stages of fear (of the Lord) and piety (taking the particular form of submission to Scripture). In Book 1 Augustine has already famously argued that the most important test of an interpretation is that it build up love of God and neighbour (*doc.* 1.36.40).

Like Origen, Augustine also sees Scripture speaking to those of very different intellectual abilities. Both he and Origen work with Paul's language in 1 Cor. 3:2 'I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not yet ready for it' (see also Heb. 5:12):

> … solid food is not incompatible with milk, even so much that [solid food] itelf turns into milk whereby it can be suitable for infants to whom it comes through the flesh of a mother or a nurse; so also did Mother Wisdom herself, who, although on high she is the solid food of the angels, deigned in a manner of speaking to turn into milk for the little one, 'when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'. But this very man Christ who, in his true flesh, true cross, true death, true Resurrection, is called the pure milk of little ones, when he is correctly apprehended by spiritual men, is found to be the Lord of the angels
>
> (*Io. ev. tr.* 98.6; Augustine 1994: 214).

A few sentences later Augustine explains that thinking of the incarnate Christ as a 'foundation' is probably more helpful, for one always builds on a foundation and without it the building collapses. The man Jesus is here the object of faith not only for those who do not have the gifts also to 'see' what it means to speak of the Word and of eternal Wisdom, he is the *necessary* object of faith for those who *do* have such gifts. Augustine draws on an ancient scientific theory in which the food ingested by a mother is turned into milk for her children to emphasize that eternal Wisdom has, as it were, become milk for us. Elsewhere in his work Augustine argues that the mind in the process of being restored must follow the same path to contemplation of the Father that the Word becoming incarnate set out for us. Faith becomes sight only in the *eschaton*; and as we are drawn there by grace,

through incorporation into the man Jesus Christ, we must continue to cling to Christ and his cross. All meaningful intellectual work must take place within an awareness of this prior (and only truly significant) movement (on this theme see Ayres 2010: ch. 6).

One of the most striking treatments of Augustine's views about the Christian's approach to Scripture—and hence about the very enterprise of Christian thinking—is to be found through the twelfth and thirteenth books of the *Confessions*. In the twelfth book Augustine offers a meditative interpretation of the beginning of Genesis, and (p. 490) reflects on the phenomenon of multiplicity of meaning when Scripture is read according to the letter:

> … what difficulty is it for me when these words can be interpreted in various ways, provided only that the interpretations are true? … In Bible study all of us are trying to find and grasp the meaning of the author we are reading, and when we believe him to be revealing truth, we do not dare to think he said anything which we either know or think to be incorrect. As long as each interpreter is endeavouring to find in the holy scriptures the meaning of the author who wrote it, what evil is it if an exegesis he gives is one shown to be true by you, light of all sincere souls, even if the author whom he is reading did not have that idea, and though he had grasped a truth, had not discerned that seen by the interpreter?
>
> (*conf.* 12.18.27; Augustine 1991: 259-260)

In this passage, Augustine emphasizes not only that the literal sense may be read in a plurality of ways, but also that mistaken readings, as long as they speak of some truth, are still for the good. We see here the importance Augustine places on interpretation having the clear goal of building up love of God and neighbour. Mistakes are not to be sought, but mistakes which speak truthfully of God are not to be rejected (see also *doc*. 1, *pro.*).

A little later we find him returning to the question of plurality in interpretation:

> A spring confined in a small space rises with more power and distributes its flow through more channels over a wider expanse than a single stream, rising from the same spring even if it flows down over many places. So also the account given by your minister [Moses], which was to benefit many expositions, uses a small measure of words to pour out a spate of clear truth. From this each commentator, to the best of his ability in these things, may draw what is true, one this way, another that, using longer and more complex channels of discourse
>
> (*conf.* 12.27.37; Augustine 1991: 266).

This dramatic image not only reveals very clearly why Augustine sees a plurality of literal readings as possible, it also shows how Augustine often ties that plurality to the possibility or necessity of extensive expansion of Scripture's words. Scripture, for Augustine, positively invites us to bring to bear philosophical tools to try and grasp the realities of which it often speaks. And yet, there is a complex dynamic at work here. In the following paragraphs of Book 12 one of the main ways in which Augustine differentiates the different kinds of readings is by reference to different levels of maturity in faith. But the question

is complex because with maturity in faith seems to come a greater awareness of the mystery of divine transcendence, and a greater ability to recognize that the Creator transcends—in other words maturity in faith seems to overlap in significant ways with intellectual maturity in faith and greater philosophical maturity. Remember, though, that maturity in faith itself takes many forms; the one who does not abandon the human Christ and his cross is the one truly faithful. This set of concerns will run throughout (p. 491) the patristic and medieval periods: intellectual inquiry is always to be valued, and some certainly can be described as possessing greater maturity in their understanding of the divine. But at every stage true faithfulness and grace is what renders such insight transformative, and that true faithfulness maybe possessed as strongly by the unlettered as by the lettered.

Book 13 of *Confessions* offers a figurative reading of the same text, using it to give an account of the relationship between creation and the new creation in Christ. In passing it is important to note that Augustine sustains a variety of ways of reading Scripture allegorically, an aspect of the preaching of Ambrose of Milan that made a great affect on him as he moved towards his conversion in the mid 380s. But there are differences from Origen. Augustine offers us fewer examples of the practice, perhaps because of controversies over allegory that were prevalent before and around him. He also reflects a number of times on where and why allegory is possible (e.g. *doc.* 3.10.14.33). Some of the most striking examples of the practice are to be found in his expositions of the Psalms (see especially Cameron 2012. For a brief introduction and further bibliography on Augustine's use of allegory see Dawson 1999 and Margerie 1994).

Returning to *Confessions* 13, we find Augustine offering a series of striking images:

> Who but you, O God, has made for us a solid firmament of authority over us in your divine scripture? For 'the heaven will fold up like a book' (Isa. 34:4), and now 'like a skin it is stretched out' above us (Ps. 103:2). Your divine scripture has more authority since the death of the mortal authors through whom you provided it for us …
>
> There are, I believe, other waters above this firmament, immortal and kept from earthly corruption … Their codex is never closed, nor is their book ever folded shut. For you yourself are a book to them and you are 'for eternity' (Ps. 47:15) …
>
> (*conf.* 15.16–17; Augustine 1991: 282–283).

The relationship between the situation of the angels and that of human beings is essential here. Over us, human beings, Scripture has been 'stretched' across the heavens; the angels have no such book stretched above them for they contemplate God directly. Scripture is thus the means by which we can, in this life, contemplate God. Just a little later we find:

> Now your word appears to us in the 'enigmatic obscurity' of clouds, and through the 'mirror' of heaven (1 Cor. 13:12), not as it really is. For although we are

> beloved by your Son, 'it does not appear yet what we shall be' (1 John 3:2). 'He looked through the lattice' of our flesh and caressed us and set us on fire; and we run after his perfume (Cant. 2:9, 1:3, 11). 'But when he appears, we shall be like him as he is' (1 John 3:2). 'As he is' Lord will be ours to see; but it is not yet given to us
>
> (*conf.* 13.15.18; Augustine 1991: 284).

Here Augustine emphasizes, first, that the divine Word appears to us in obscure form: we do not see it/him as he is. But, second, Augustine complements this with insistence that our movement towards the Word as he is has been stimulated by the Word's (p. 492) descent to us in the Incarnation and his enkindling of our desire for God. We should believe that our movement towards God through the Scriptures will be completed because he himself draws us on, even if we must recognize we are not there yet. Finally, a few paragraphs later:

> Passing from the lower good works of the active life to the delights of contemplation, may we 'hold the word of life' which is above and 'appear as lights in the world' (Phil. 2:15) by adhering to the solid firmament of scripture. For there you hold conversation with us to teach us to distinguish between intelligible and sensible things as between day and night, or between souls dedicated to the intelligible realm and souls dedicated to the material world of the senses
>
> (*conf.* 13.18.22; Augustine 1991: 285).

The Christian life is, then, a passing through the active life towards the contemplative that will be ours in heaven. But we make this movement by being ever attentive to the scriptural firmament set above us. This firmament set above is the means through which God 'holds conversation with us', teaching us and reforming the mind's abilities to make appropriate distinctions (one of the very best accounts of how Augustine views the graceful engagement with Scripture is that of Dodaro 2004: chs. 4–5).

Augustine: Disputed Questions

As with Origen, I want to end by turning away from the vision of theological thinking articulated by Augustine and merely note a few themes of his thought that were formative for later Latin theological tradition. Two of the most obvious is Augustine's teaching on original sin and grace. I will not treat that here because it is covered in other chapters. I want instead to mention briefly some other themes: the Trinity, ecclesiology, and a complex of questions concerning asceticism, sex, and marriage.

Augustine's Trinitarian theology is fundamentally a pro-Nicene theology, one of a family of theologies that were articulated in Greek and Latin (and Syriac) contexts after about the year 360 (see Ayres 2010 and 2011). In the twentieth century one strand of influential scholarship strongly criticized Augustine for supposedly being inattentive to the distinctions between the divine persons, inattentive to the true hypostatic reality of the Spirit,

and even setting Latin Trinitarian theology on a path toward deism. These readings of Augustine have been strongly refuted in recent decades, which has enabled us to see him more clearly as a highly distinctive defender of Nicene theology. Augustine became a key authority in later Latin theology and, because of this status it is easy for us to forget both that he was often experimental in his thought, and that for most of his career he did not have extensive access to contemporary Greek Trinitarian theology.

(p. 493) Augustine came a little late to a major controversy in Latin theology about the value of marriage and sexual renunciation (see Hunter 2007). Although one strand of modern thinkers has presented Augustine as still shot through with the dualistic Manichaeism of his youth and as virtually the architect of later Western thought's supposed antipathy to sex, in fact his approach to contemporary debates over marriage steered a middle course. Augustine's negotiation of the relationship between married couples shows considerable nuance, and his clear recognition that women are in the image of God qua being human (rather than through their relationship with a husband) is of obvious significance for theological anthropology.

While Augustine's views on grace are explored in another chapter of this volume(see ch. *24, it is important to note the interaction between those views and his approach towards marriage and towards ascetic communities. While many of his contemporaries assumed not only that the celibate ascetic life was a higher version of the Christian life, but also that ascetics, by virtue of their decision for celibacy were more advanced in the path towards God, Augustine's theology of grace did not allow him this certainty. Pride in one's own supposed virtue is, for Augustine, a sure sign that one has simply misunderstood that all merit comes to us through grace. Augustine's highly influential views on the state, his vision of the intertwining of the two cities that was to be so important an influence on later Western thought, are treated in detail elsewhere in the volume (see 'Catholic Teaching on Politics and the State,' Pecknold, this volume).

The Legacy of Origen and Augustine

It was the earliest Christian centuries that delivered to us the heart of the Catholic conception of what it means to argue theologically. It was in these centuries that Christians came to a basic shared vision of Christian thinking as a meditation on the meaning of Scripture understood as a unified corpus of 'Old' and 'New' Testaments. Christian writers continued to dispute about which methods one should apply when and where, and what did and did not count as plausible or faithful interpretation, but this dispute occurred within some key boundaries. This vision of Christian thinking as scripturally focused brought with it also the insistence that Christian thinking was (to different degrees and in different ways) a philosophical enterprise. There is a direct line between the early Christians' adoption of the idea that their thinking was philosophical—made evident through their attempts to incorporate all that could be judged true about the cosmic order, and through their adoption and adaptation of philosophical techniques of argument—and the later rise of scholasticism. Origen and Augustine, as mediators of emergent traditions of

theological argument, and as individual contributors to those traditions, stand as providentially ordered figures aiding the Catholic tradition in its struggle to explore what it means to be attentive to revelation as well as speculative and generous in thought.

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Denys and Later Platonic Traditions

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This chapter on later Platonic traditions focuses Denys, otherwise known as Ps-Dionysius the Areopagite. A late fifth- to early sixth-century theologian, influenced by the Platonist philosophers Plotinus, Damascius, and above all Proclus, Denys has been influential throughout Catholic theology. The chapter begins by placing Denys's innovations against the background of Christian engagement with Neoplatonism since St Augustine. After tracing Denys's influence from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries, his role in modernity is considered, tracing a path through Pierre de Bérulle and neo-scholasticism. The chapter concludes by noting Denys's importance for some postmodern Catholic thinkers.

Keywords: Platonism, Augustine, Plotinus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Denys, Iamblichus, Proclus

WE must begin this chapter not with Denys, but with the prior engagement of Christian theologians with Platonic traditions. The Middle Platonisms of such thinkers as Cicero (107–43 BC), Philo of Alexandria (25 BC–AD 50), Clement of Alexandria (AD *c*.150–*c*.215), and Origen (AD 184–254) formed essential features of the common theology and spirituality of the earlier patristic Church. These features include: the understanding of God as perfect, immutable, and incorporeal being only able to do good; the Divine Word as containing the Platonic forms which have become His ideas; union with the *Logos* as source and goal of knowing; the immortality of the human soul; ascetic discipline in respect to sense and appetites and stage-by-stage development of the mind's capacities as required for ascent towards God; allegorical interpretation of Scripture as necessary and giving its highest sense; the insubstantiality of evil; and the unity of philosophy, kingship, prophecy, and priesthood in Christ and those governing as his vicars. Two traditions emerging out of the subsequent Neoplatonism of Plotinus (204–70 BC)--traditions that intensified and transmuted these features--had the deepest possible presence in subsequent Catholic belief.

From Plotinus to Augustine

One tradition, stemming from Porphyry (*c.*234–305)--a student of Plotinus who taught in Rome after him, and the translator of some of their texts, Marius Victorinus (fl. 350–75), a Christian convert and theologian--had Augustine (354–430) as its incalculably influential convert in forming Latin Christianity. Plotinian theology had already been preached to him by Bishop Ambrose of Milan (337–97) who continued as a great authority for Latins. As the Latin West and the Byzantine East increasingly divided, (p. 497) this Platonic way, communicated pre-eminently by these authorities--along with Cassiodorus (485–585) and Boethius (480–524), so dominated Latin theology until the twelfth century as to be almost its exclusive philosophical foundation. Boethius knew and took up some of the doctrines of the other major tradition. His Platonism, consoling him as a prisoner facing death, was common to the diverse schools, crossed the pagan–Christian divide, and used literary devices to move mind, soul, and body from the bottom of the cave to facing God.

Distinguishing this tradition from the one to which Denys belongs, it contributes to Catholic theology the dominant representation of God within it, namely, as incomprehensible pure being, in which, because thought and being are one, absolute truth and goodness are found. The incomprehensible Trinity is conceptualized as being, knowing, and loving. All else are triadic images or likenesses of the Trinitarian God, a view of the cosmos best worked through by medieval Augustinians such as Bonaventure (1221-1274). Self-knowledge and the knowledge of God are mutually implicated and are all Augustine seeks. He transforms Plotinus by unifying the self in an unbreakable Trinitarian self-reflectivity mirroring God’s. Nonetheless, reiterating the Plotinian ascents to union, he shares Plotinus’ enormously influential discovery that when the human touches its ultimate ground, it loses all knowledge of itself and can only turn what happens into a describable experience by falling out of the union.

For Augustine the Platonists teach that God as living immortal truth, Mind, or Word, provides grace sustaining humans and all creation, and draws us to himself. Indeed, true and certain knowing always depend on our mind’s access to the divine immutable thinking above it. In Augustine’s modification of Plotinus, beatitude is by knowledge of God’s essence and in the thirteenth century this is defined as Roman Catholic dogma. That creates problems for adherents of the other tradition, who follow Plato and Moses to a conception of beatitude by union with God above being and knowing. Because, in Plotinus and in those Christians following him on beatitude, union with the One-Good-non-being is solely by its grace and beyond all intellectual effort and self-consciousness, the Augustinian ascent and his God look to be dominantly intellectualist and too much by human power. When that is countered by placing love above and beyond knowing as the medium of union, problems in distinguishing the divine and the human emerge.

Ascent in the Plotinian–Porphyrian–Augustinian tradition is by purification from the sensible and material. Creatures are a graduated series of participations which are less good to the degree that they are less in being and less true. The inner is superior, the outer inferior. While evil has no substantial being, partly because ascent is a turn against the out-

er sensual and material, and partly because this tradition has an inadequate account of matter's origin, nature, and role—this is the criticism from the perspective of the Neoplatonic tradition within which Denys stands—there is a tendency to regard matter as evil even when this is formally denied. The Neoplatonic eternity is out of time, not its endless extension, and is the simultaneous possession of the entire good. The divine mind in its eternal stability exercises a beneficent providence over all things great and small.

(p. 498) From Iamblichus to Denys

The other tradition of new Platonism, developed among pagans from the Syrian philosopher and theologian Iamblichus (250-325) through Proclus (412-485) and Damascius (*c*. 458–*c*.538). Under Damascius the Academy fled east as a result of Christian persecutions, but in Denys this tradition had a propagator of unmatchable authority. We shall call the author of the tiny *Dionysian Corpus* Denys, because he, after accumulating several personae, some of them incompatible—as Peter Abelard had already discerned by the twelfth century—became the patron saint of France and, in the Catholic world, the French have remained his most loyal disciples.

Denys identified himself with the Dionysius converted by Paul's sermon on the Athenian Areopagus and with the content and method of the Apostle's preaching (Acts 17:22–34). His writing and his hidden life manifest only in that writing, also declare 'the unknown God'; they do so by using the religious and philosophical culture of the Athenians he and the Apostle Paul addressed. Paul had been converted in a blinding encounter with a heavenly light 'beyond the brightness of the sun' (Acts 26.13). When describing the one 'caught up into the third heaven' (1 Cor. 12.2), he spoke in the third person, because, as he writes in another context, 'I live, but not I, Christ lives in me' (Gal. 2.20). Denys explicated this ascent and vision and Paul's passage beyond the opposition of identity and difference by uniting the Pauline writings with what descended to him from Philo of Alexandria, on Moses' entrance into the divine darkness, and Plotinus on union with the One, and from the new Athenian mystical theologians Proclus and Damascius. His theology is thoroughly mystical, combining affirmation and negation, in order to move with the pagan Neoplatonists, beyond affirming and denying, to silence louder than any speech.

Inspired by Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988) who was under the influence of the twentieth-century return to the Platonism of the Greek Fathers in reaction against neoscholasticism, Jean-Luc Marion (born 1946) attempts a retrieval of this feature of Denys by a theological third way. 'De-nomination' is beyond affirmation and negation, but, in a manner characteristic of one side of the present retrieval of Denys, Marion denies its Neoplatonic character and origins. Denys's kataphatic *Divine Names* begins from the good beyond thought and being for which Plato's analogy was the sun (*Republic* 509 BC) and the apophatic *Mystical Theology* sums up the system by praying for union with the same in a brilliantly shining darkness and a trumpeting silence, where body, soul, and mind are left behind.

Since the late nineteenth century, philological evidence has accumulated that Denys wrote after Plotinus, whom he quotes on union. The *Divine Names* reproduces parts of the lost Greek text of Proclus' *On the Subsistence of Evils* so extensively that it is used to reconstruct them. From it Denys transmits Proclus' denial that evil has substance and his refutation of the notion that matter is evil or its cause; enhanced by his authority, they become normative Catholic doctrine. He was under the tutelage of Damascius, whose method of combining kataphasis and apophasis he uses, thus (p. 499) intensifying the ineffability of the First. This confirms doubts about the character of Denys's identity with Paul's Athenian convert which accompanied the appearance of the *corpus* in the sixth century and arose periodically afterwards. Nonetheless, both because of the quasi-Apostolic authority of the works for those who accepted the author's self-identification, and because of their content and poetic beauty, the influence of his *corpus* is even greater than Augustine's. It reaches not only through the Latin Church and the cultures which arose out of it, where Augustine is paramount, but also to the East, both Christian and Islamic; for example, there were Syriac translations beginning immediately after its appearance and an Arabic one in the eleventh century.

In Catholicism, the *corpus* is important for the doctrine of God, philosophy, angelology, ecclesiology, political and social theory and practice, mysticism and spirituality generally, liturgy, art and architecture, poetry and dogma. On the last, Denys was understood in the Greek and Latin traditions to have claimed to witness the Dormition of the Mother of God. In these, Denys's Christianity and later Platonism combine and lead to each other. The Latin Church came to have other sources of later Platonism in this tradition, Islamic, Jewish, Christian, and pagan. They included, beginning with Eriugena (815–72), a translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Making of Man*, and, beginning in the twelfth century, translations of works of Proclus, of Islamic confections constructed out of Plotinian and Proclean texts, of the commentaries on Aristotle by Simplicius (*c.*490–*c.*560) and Ammonius (*c.*440–*c.*520). No others transmitted it with Denys's authority.

Distinguishing this tradition from the one to which Augustine belongs, it contributes to Catholic theology a logic which surpasses transcendent/immanent, matter/spirit, body/soul, sense/reason, evil/good, self/other dualisms by way of the ineffable infinite Principle. God is beyond thought and being, and, although one and good are higher than being, He both has all names and no name. Providence belongs to God not as mind, but as primal goodness. His absolute transcendence makes him completely immanent; creatures are the divine nothingness as theophany. The First has its being and power in the substance and operation of creatures and is more the cause of any effect than the ones immediately proximate. If the spiritual direction of the other tradition is ascending, this one descends. Jean Trouillard (1907-1984), Catholicism's greatest twentieth-century theologian in this tradition, writes that Proclus' universe:

> is traversed by a series of vertical lines, which like rays diverge from the same universal center and refer back to it the furthermost and the most diverse appearances. These chains tend to absorb the hierarchical ordering of the levels and to

> link them all directly to the One … Thus, a stone is itself able to participate in the divine power to purify
>
> (Trouillard 1965: 23–25).

Iamblichus sets the sacramental and incarnational direction of this Platonic way. His gods contain and employ matter for the sake of human souls altogether descended into the realm of becoming. He has a sense for the integrity of nature and how it serves justice. Among his followers, e.g. Proclus and Boethius, fate, binding together the natural (p. 500) order, is seen through the dominance of providence, and as its instrument in leading souls towards virtue, freedom, and the divine. Matter can neither be evil nor the cause of evil. The theurgic or sacramental—God's cooperation with humans in their salvation through material things made holy—and hierarchies of holy helpers, incorporeal and human, are required for our salvation and the providential care of the cosmos. Thus, Denys speaks of a treatise of symbolic theology, either not written or lost, concerning the material theophanies. The human soul must start its ascent from these sensible 'veils'; a demand Aquinas loves to repeat with the added authority of its source. Denys's treatises on the celestial and the ecclesiastical hierarchies gave the Catholic Church her angelology, elements of her sacramental understanding of salvation, and essentials of what she turned into a hierarchical ecclesiology.

Hierarchical theories of the relation of Church and state, with little or no basis in the *Dionysian Corpus*, but derived from it in the Western context, subordinated the secular to the sacred power. From Iamblichus via Denys came the 'Divine law' of complete mediation—that there is no passage from the bottom to the top except through the middle terms—governing both nature and grace. Pope Boniface VIII (Pope AD 1294–1303), citing Denys's authority, used it to justify the greatest claims for papal power. From Porphyry via Iamblichus comes another rule, a thing is known according to the power of the knower. It gives priority to subjectivity and enables the construction of hierarchical systems where the perfection of the higher is not diminished by its care for the lower. Boethius and later Catholic theologians such as Aquinas, following their pagan predecessors, use it to reconcile divine providence and predestination with human free will and the efficacy of prayer. The fundamental structure of the systems, one which for Christian theologians unites philosophical and scriptural patterns, is that formulated most completely by Proclus and communicated most effectively by Denys: all things remain in the First, go out from it into distinct being, and return into it in achieving their appropriate perfections.

For Iamblichus and Proclus, in contrast to Plotinian–Augustinian Platonism, our mind has no direct access to the divine thinking and, before being able to turn inward, must turn outward to sense, symbol, and sacrament for elevation. The absence of immediate access to divine knowing is matched by an absence of immediate self-knowledge and self-reflexivity. In the thirteenth century, when such Latin theologians as Albert the Great (*c.* 1200-1280) and Thomas Aquinas gained access to Aristotle's psychology and metaphysics, Denys and Aristotle were perceived to cohere, lending sacred authority to a philosophical way, which, from the middle of the fourteenth century, became a required

preparation for Catholic theology students. The results of the mixing of Aristotle, Augustine, Proclus, and Denys within Catholic theology are diverse.

On one pole of the cosmos, the self immersed in the sensible is embraced and aided, and the ways of sacrament and symbol, art and liturgy, nature and philosophy are affirmed. On the other lie all the paradoxes of manifest hiddenness and the passage beyond the opposition of identity and difference, affirmation and negation. These will be explored most creatively among Catholics by Eriugena, Bonaventure, Eckhart, Cusanus, (p. 501) Jean Trouillard, and Michel Henry. The problems that emerge for Catholic theology do not come from Denys's following of Proclus, for whom ascent leads to silent awe and the soul moves with the gods without ceasing to be soul. Rather the problems arise out of what he takes from Plotinus on union. When Denys is mixed with Augustine to construct Latin erotic mysticism, especially strong at the end of the Middle Ages and at the beginning of modernity, the difference between self and God seems to disappear. Catholicism turns to Augustine when defining the beatific vision and Denys is interpreted or translated to cohere with his theology of pure being, while those who followed Denys into what became heretical formulations in the West after 1336, because too negative in respect to intellect, are condemned.

A project of pagan Neoplatonism influenced Catholic theology by diverse means, at various times, and in different ways. Porphyry had endeavoured to reconcile Plato and Aristotle. Proclus undertook it systematically and widened the project to embrace reconciling revelations, including religious practices and myths, to one another and to philosophy, which is regarded as having revelation at its origins. Nicholas of Cusa (1463–94) especially in *On the Peace of Faith*, Pico della Mirandola (1401–65) and his Renaissance contemporaries, are the most well-known Catholic heirs of the *convenientia*, but there are many others including Aquinas. Boethius, along with his pagan contemporary Simplicius, took up the enterprise in the sixth century, and the *Consolation of Philosophy* is one result. Overall, in antiquity, *convenientia* gave authority to the Hellenic tradition as both inclusive and consistent. One influential result, both with Islamic philosophers and Latin medievals, was the reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle on creation.

The pagan harmonizers draw together the *Timaeus*, and its Demiurge, with Aristotle's *Physics*, and its Unmoved Mover, by making Aristotle's God an efficient cause and by reconciling his eternal universe with that in the *Timaeus*, which is generated and corruptible, though perpetually held in being by the divine will. Their success results in the notion that both Plato and Aristotle taught creation to be *ex nihilo*, i.e. there is only one divine source of all being. Towards the end of his writing, Aquinas ascribed the doctrine to both Plato and Aristotle, learning of their unity on this matter both indirectly from Arabic Islamic philosophical theologians and directly from pagan Neoplatonic conciliators. Christians such as Boethius were uncomfortable with one side of the conciliation, the ascription of eternity to creation. Another sixth-century figure, the Monophysite Christian John Philoponus (*c.*490–570), educated and arguing within the Neoplatonic school, attacked the demonstrations of both Aristotle and Proclus on the eternity of the world, and began the unravelling of the whole project. Translated into Syriac, Arabic, and Latin, he lies at

the origin of dialectical theology among Eastern Christians, as well as Islamic and Jewish Arabic theologians. It starts with religious doctrines and makes philosophy into an instrument producing arguments for them. Catholics such as Bonaventure use arguments derived from Philoponus, but the conception of philosophy belonging to dialectical theology is generally rejected in Catholicism, for which philosophy is the love of wisdom and thus of God as immortal truth.

(p. 502) From Eriugena (815-877) to Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464)

The degree to which Catholic theology lived within the new Platonisms of late antiquity comes out in the first theological system produced within the Latin West, that by John Scottus Eriugena in the ninth century. Astonishingly, he discovered his Neoplatonic principles almost entirely in Christian theological writings. The condemnation and suppression of his *chef d'oeuvre*, the *Periphyseon*, did not prevent it exhibiting the foundation his combining and reconciling of the two Platonic traditions gives to Catholic theology. Eriugena's system is what Philo called Genesis, a *physiologia*, a term John learned from Gregory of Nyssa. Providing a theological account of the cosmos, the *Periphyseon* continues the Greek and Latin patristic hexameral literature arising out of Philo's unification of Genesis and the *Timaeus*, forwarded in the *Hexamaera* of Basil and Ambrose, and in the several commentaries on the first book of Moses by Augustine. The system unites theology, cosmology, angelology, psychology, aesthetics, anthropology, and eschatology, and its mentality keeps resurfacing as an ideal for their future unification in Catholic thought. After Boethius, Eriugena was the first to combine the two Platonic traditions of late antiquity. However, in his case, the differences were more clearly set out and their reconciliation was more dynamic and creative.

For Eriugena, the Latin Fathers were foundational—pre-eminently Augustine, crucially Boethius, and importantly Ambrose. Eriugena's theology was transformed by the Greek texts he translated: the Dionysian *corpus*, the *Ambigua* and *Scholiae* of Maximus the Confessor (580–662), and *On the Making of Man* by Gregory of Nyssa (335–395). Eriugena established a medieval and Renaissance pattern; namely, when the Platonism of Augustine met that of Denys, the latter determined the systematic structure; in contrast, during the modern period, especially under the pull from Protestantism, Augustine more often dominates. Eriugena's profoundly authentic retrieval and highly original reworking of doctrines of both traditions would not be created again until we reach Albert the Great's progeny on the Rhine culminating in Nicholas of Cusa, directly or indirectly, under Eriugena's influence. Eriugena and the host of Catholic theologians who followed him in uniting the Augustinian and the Dionysian Platonisms, undertook what the theologians of the Byzantine East and their offspring did not venture.

Eriugena's radically Neoplatonic doctrines almost always reach beyond what later Catholic theologians will teach. Within Catholic theology, Eckhart (*c.*1260–*c.*1328), Cusanus and the twentieth-century French Catholic Neoplatonists from Trouillard to Stanis-

las Breton (1912-2005) and Michel Henry (1922-2003) will think many of them again. They reoccur inevitably, however, because they show both to what theology can be led, and they make more cautious and less consistent positions intelligible.

His *physiologia* is a total system, because, as Plato had taught, genesis embraces what is and what is not, and the divine superessential nothingness, the infinite fullness beyond all things which are and are not, is the principle of his all-inclusive theology. This nature is completely divided logically; it goes out from and returns to itself by a divine (p. 503) self-creation, because God is Himself the nothingness from which He creates. Extreme transcendence and immanence are complementary for Eriugena. Because the divine nothingness comes into being and knows itself only in what derives from it, the First is immanent in creatures without compromise either to His own transcendence or to their existence. In the pagan Neoplatonists, soul mediates between supersensible and the sensible. Eriugena followed the Christian Fathers in giving this role to the human. He found the human as the immediate connection of God and the all in Augustine and radicalized it through Gregory of Nyssa. Human nature is that in which all things are created. It is the medium of creation, because, uniquely among beings, it possesses all the forms of knowing and ignorance, and because the human mind shares the divine nothingness and self-ignorance. The Neoplatonic move to make the subject and its perspectives fundamental is pushed to the point where there are no absolute objects. Like Neoplatonic systems generally, *Periphyseon* is an interplay of diverse subjectivities.

Eriugena retains Augustine's formulae on the relation of revealed theology and philosophy which will motivate Latin theology until Aquinas starts their generic separation. He asserts the identity of true philosophy and true religion and that 'No one enters heaven unless through philosophy, the seed of splendours' (Eriugena 1939: 57.15). Here he seems to have Boethius' image of Lady Philosophy before his mind, a personage with a long pedigree, pagan, scriptural, and patristic; she is Augustine's interlocutor in his *Soliloquy*. In the *Consolation*, she opens the door of heaven in virtue of her capacity to be earthy, human, and heavenly, and even to pierce through the heavens. Gone, since Boethius and Denys, are Christian polemics like Augustine's against the errors and limits of pagan philosophy. They were replaced by the sense that Christian theology belonged within a continuous tradition reaching back to the inspired Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Plato, and that keeping this priceless heritage alive belonged to the one thing needful. For Eriugena, philosophy is neither pagan, as opposed to Christian, nor mundane, as opposed to theology. Dialectic, allegorical interpretation, and the *itinerarium* towards union with God all belong to its work which is to give us the mind of Christ. Medieval Augustinians such as Anselm (*c.*1033–*c.*1109) and Bonaventure maintain this conception.

After Eriugena, the Dionysian direction of Platonism goes underground until the twelfth century, being overwhelmed by Augustine, as it would be again from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. As already indicated, beginning in the twelfth century, several other sources of this theological, spiritual, and cultural way besides Eriugena make it a necessity for up-to-date theologians. Indeed, despite Honorius of Autun's (1080–1154) *Clavis physicae*, other covert means of getting his teaching, and the ongoing use of his *Exposi-*

tion of the Celestial Hierarchies of Denys and his translations, Eriugena will be among its least evident sources. We cannot survey the complete theological impact of this Platonic tradition, but three sketches will take us to the cusp of modernity.

From the Victorines to Bonaventure

Three Catholic appropriations of Denys emerge from Eriugena *On the Celestial Hierarchies*, though two of them are translations in the negative sense, i.e. also (p. 504) traductions. The first I have mentioned already: what happened to Denys's ecclesiastical hierarch. In the twelfth century, Hugh of St Victor (1096–1141) and Honorius turn him into the Roman pontiff as the single apex of the sacred and secular powers. Hugh *On the Celestial Hierarchy* is a principal source for papalists among whom we may count Aquinas and Bonaventure. Neither Hugh, nor many Latins, ask what Denys's own thinking on the relation of political and ecclesiastical power was—certainly not what developed in the West. In a second matter, Hugh and his successors do follow Denys. They agree with him that the Divine Law of hierarchical meditation prevents Isaiah 6:6 from being read literally: no seraph could have left God's presence to descend to a human. Both for Denys and for his Catholic followers, salvation preserves and restores hierarchical order. In this, Catholic theology goes against its Augustinian foundations, where the tendency is to join the human and the divine immediately. In the Augustinian seventeenth century, Bérulle will confront this tension.

Third, for Denys, following Plotinus, union with God is non-intellective (see Harrington 2005). The Augustinian Latins have trouble with this, and, already in Eriugena, Dionysian mystical union is interpreted intellectually. When commenting on Denys, Eriugena provides room for love and affectivity to take us where understanding cannot go. When Denys and Eriugena are read in the twelfth century in the Augustinian Abbey of St Victor in Paris by Richard, Hugh, and Thomas Gallus (*c.*1200–46), love and affectivity as the powers of ascent and union carry the soul both beyond understanding and to intellect's consummation in a way which would be recognizable neither to Denys nor to the pagan Neoplatonists. Here we find the origins of a characteristic of Catholic theology, mysticism, and spirituality, and of its reconstruction of Denys in union with Augustine, paradigmatically modelled in the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* of the Seraphic Doctor, Bonaventure. The ironies involved are epitomized in the fact that Denys did not identify the fire of the Seraphim as the fire of love, though by this love Bonaventure's journey moves, and in it he concludes. The Middle English *Cloud of Unknowing* is one of many writings that made popular affective Dionysian mysticism with its exaltation of love.

Another irony had more serious consequences. As I indicated, Denys followed Plotinus into union beyond intellect and self-consciousness, and Damascius taught him a logic of ascent beyond identity and difference, affirmation and negation. By reading Denys with Proclus' *On the Parmenides*, the *On the Not-Other* of Cusanus turns Dionysian formulae into means both of finding God and of generating the cosmos. But other directions were taken in the Catholic world. Denys's mystical theology was intellectualized from the beginning of its appearance in Latin. When it was subsequently turned into erotic affectivity against

intellect, late medieval and early modern Catholicism detected heretical identifications of self and God. There were condemnations and burnings at the stake.

Thomas Aquinas

The hierarchies which pervade the thought of Aquinas are at root Neoplatonic. The main sources for Thomas' thought about hierarchy are Denys, Greek and Arabic Neoplatonic (p. 505) commentators, and finally the *Elements of Theology* of Proclus himself. Crucially, in this mélange, Aristotle is understood though the anonymous *Liber de Causis*, once thought to be by Aristotle but actually compiled by Islamic monotheists from Proclus and Plotinus and making many of the same alterations to pagan Neoplatonism Denys made, thus increasing the authority for Aquinas of both Denys and Aristotle. There are, however, strong counterbalances from the influences of Augustine and Aristotle. Hierarchy is evident in Aquinas's ontology of pure being, structured by the tensions between being and unity, affirmation and negation. The Divine Law of mediation and the rule that knowing is according to the mode of the knower, interconnect the divine, angelic, and human subjectivities in a hierarchical manner. His hermeneutic of Scripture with its assimilation to philosophical theology produces total system, and his understanding of the Church subordinates lower ecclesiastical orders and the secular power to the pope. His Neoplatonic reconciliation of Platonic reminiscence and Aristotelian abstraction, when treating human intellect, indicates the presence of yet further Neoplatonic themes that we cannot detail here, but an amplification of something already mentioned will indicate this direction of his theology.

Aquinas' treatise on angels (*ST* I, qq. 50-64), his exposition of the *Liber de Causis*, and his questions about the cardinal virtues, were all written after 1270, when he knew a great deal about Neoplatonism. The last work exhibits a hierarchy of natural and theological virtues that exist analogously in God, angels, and humans, which Thomas derived from Plotinus via Porphyry and Simplicius. In *On Separate Substances*, Thomas definitively reversed his earlier judgement of Plato on *creatio ex nihilo*, joining him with Aristotle. Significantly and characteristically, he states the reconciling doctrine in Platonic language. When asserting that, according to Plato and Aristotle, being is given to the whole universe of things by a first being which is its own being, the First is called 'the most simple' and the existence of other things is said to be by 'participation.' Having looked at Plato more and more in Neoplatonic terms, Thomas understood Platonic hierarchy through an absolute subordination and derivation of all else from the One, so that universal causality and providence belong to God.

Contrasts with Bonaventure and Albert are matters of emphasis in respect to the same elements. Bonaventure is both more Dionysian, in the way already indicated, and more Augustinian. His Augustinianism is epistemological, insisting on the minds' immediate access to its own Trinitarian self-reflexivity of being, knowing, and loving, and to the Divine light by which certain knowledge is alone possible. Nonetheless, he adapts elements of Aristotle's psychology to support a Dionysian symbolic theology. Bonaventure replicates and expands the paradoxical logic of the coincidence of opposites, which Denys learned

from Damascius, so authentically that he is the model for Nicholas of Cusa and Renaissance Neoplatonists. When he reiterates the Augustinian identity of philosophy and true religion in the circumstances of the thirteenth-century retrieval of Aristotle, he obliges philosophy to prove what revelation teaches. Bonaventure led the charge against the Aristotelians in the Parisian Faculty of Arts who are accused of creating an autonomous philosophy. From 1270, the Franciscans, of whom he was the head, pressed for or as prelates enacted the strongest condemnations of philosophical propositions in the history of the Catholic Church. Some of them would have entrapped Aquinas had he not died first.

(p. 506) Thomas's fellow Dominican and teacher, Albert the Great, is at the other pole. Along with Siger of Brabant (*c.*1240–84), whom both the Franciscans and Aquinas opposed and who was caught in the condemnations, Albert continues the old concordist tradition in respect to Plato and Aristotle inherited from late antiquity and adds to it the very Arabs from whom Aquinas increasingly distinguished himself in favour of late Greek philosophic commentators. Albert remained so convinced by his Dionysian Peripatetic union of Denys with Neoplatonic Arabic Aristotelianism into which he had initiated Aquinas that he did not follow his student into acknowledging the Platonism of the Dionysian corpus or of the *Liber de Causis*.

From Albert the Great to Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494)

The movement from Albert and Aquinas to Cusa involves an increasing knowledge of Proclus, an increasing perception of Aristotle as a negative theologian via his assimilation to Proclus by Arabic thinkers (Flasch 2008), the growing influence of Eriugena's doctrines, and the increasing pre-eminence of Denys as philosopher, theologian, and spiritual guide. Proclus' *Elements of Theology, Three Opuscula*, and *Commentary on the Parmenides*, translated by Moerbeke in the thirteenth century were more used, and Cusa commissioned a translation of the *Platonic Theology* of Proclus. He used it, as did contemporaries and successors such as Cardinal Bessarion (1403–72), Marsilio Ficino (1433–99), and Pico. Indeed, Ficino published his own Christian *Platonic Theology on the Immorality of Souls*. This work and others are full of Denys, two of whose treatises Ficino translated, as he did the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Despite taking up here and elsewhere magical and demonic aspects of Proclus, which medieval theologians had eschewed, and which nearly got its author convicted of heresy, it probably played a role in the promulgation of the dogma of the immortality of the soul in 1518, after Ficino's death. Even conservative churchmen could follow him, as John Colet (1466-1519), Dean of St Paul's London just before the Protestant Reformation, showed. Using Ficino and Pico, he integrated Augustine into a Dionysian framework, which included a cosmology with its astrological, physico-magical aspects subordinated to the angelic hierarchy and coordinated with the ecclesiastical. He and his contemporaries judged that all this served to explicate St Paul's teaching.

Eckhart put together Aristotle, Proclus, Denys, the *Liber*, Eriugenian doctrines, Avicenna, Averroes, Moses Maimonides, and Aquinas in a mystical and negative theology. Although his Dionysian dialectic of identity and difference got him condemned in 1329, it was tak-

en up again by Michel Henry in the twentieth century. Henry subordinates Being and Thought to 'Oblivion' and reaffirms Eckhart's statements of identity between the essence of the soul and the operation of God. So he is able to reiterate a modified version of Eriugena's teaching about God creating himself in the human: 'God gives birth to me as himself' (Eckhart, *German Sermon* 6). With other French theologians (such as Stanislas Breton) having a sympathy for Neoplatonism in the Iamblichan tradition, Henry attempts to overcome body/mind dualism in a material phenomenology.

(p. 507) Nicholas of Cusa's move to the Pope during the Conciliar Movement went with his reading of Denys. Uniting Proclus and Denys as the highest theologians, he credits the identities between their texts to the dependence of both on 'the divine Plato'. Nicholas succeeds in employing the Dionysian dialectic of identity and difference in the notion of 'the not-other' and retrieving Eriugena's Divine self-creation as defining his own nothingness in finite creatures, without being condemned. He had not succumbed to the affective transmutation of Denys. Instead, for him, vision without an object by Augustine's 'sharp point of the mind', the Neoplatonic 'flower of the intellect', was ultimate. His *On the Peace of Faith*, in response to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, takes a formula he found in the Latin translation of the Koran, 'one religion in a variety of rites', and, by a Proclean/Dionysian logic, endeavours religious concord. Religions are human ways to the simple, unknowable, and ineffable God, established by his multiple messengers. Christianity is reduced to rationalized or allegorized essentials, to become the common religion, which philosophy justifies both to Christians and non-Christians. Philosophy argues from the elements of Christianity which the non-Christian religions contain and presuppose. The sensuous and polytheistic elements included in the diverse rites are a Dionysian concession to our immersion in body.

When Pico della Mirandola pushed the conciliating venture further in his *900 Conclusions, Philosophical, Cabalistic and Theological*, some of his theses were condemned and the project was stopped by Pope Innocent VIII (Pope AD 1484–92). His successor, Alexander VI (1492-1503), who was open to Hermeticism and philosophical magic, supported Pico; but this did not save Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) from the Inquisition's stake, a century after the death of Pico. Pico, too, has a twentieth-century French theologian to retrieve him for a renewed Catholicism. Henri de Lubac (1896-1991) finds that both Pico and Cusa rejected the doctrine of pure nature, a distortion of Augustine to which de Lubac traced origins of modern atheism. As a leader of the movement that moved Catholic theology out of neo-scholasticism, he sought a corrective from Greek patristic Platonism and an understanding of Aquinas which was open to this side of his theology.

Pierre Cardinal de Bérulle (1575-1629): a Dionysian Hierarch in an Augustinian Age

Renaissance Neoplatonism provoked both Protestant and Catholic reactions. Most of these were Augustinian, the Protestant ones almost exclusively so, but Denys still played an important role in Catholic theology. Modern Catholicism is theologically Augustinian

and neo-scholastic. To these belong its distortions: the spirituality of pure love, the notion of pure nature, the irresolvable disputes about grace, occasionalism, ontologism, for example.

(p. 508) The association of John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila with Denys saved them from the Spanish Inquisition. Denys did not, however, save Pauline crucifixion mysticism in the Rheno-Flemish Dionysian tradition from ascetical practices and a negative theology, transcending all concepts and images, which bypassed the humanity of Jesus. In response, Bérulle combined Denys and Augustine in a self-consciously revolutionary way. He developed a strongly hierarchical spiritual system according to the Latin interpretation of Denys originating with Hugh of St Victor. However, for Bérulle, the priestly sacrifice of Christ offering his humanity to his divinity gives him and every priest hierarchical power (for Bérulle see also Van Nieuwenhove, in this volume). The bishop is hierarch as high priest and the priesthood of all believers enables an everyday mysticism. The Council of Trent decreed the creation of seminaries to effect its reforms. The companies established or inspired by Bérulle—Oratorian, Sulpician, Eudist, for example—undertook working in them with the aim that parish priests should develop a mystical life and be capable of directing souls. A deep theological modification of Denys was required to effect this transformation of Church and world. In 1614, Bérulle proclaimed, explicitly invoking Copernicus, a revolution against Denys. Within a Dionysian framework, the hierarchies would be reversed. All the hierarchies of angels will adore Jesus, the God-man. Bérulle's revolution is criticized for substituting Christology for theology, encouraging clericalism, and for making sacrifice the Christian centre, but it dominated Catholic seminaries, and thus Catholic spirituality, almost to the present.

From Roman Neo-Scholasticism to Dionysian Paris: Postmodern Retrievals

The theology of the modern seminary was neo-scholastic, and the last revival of Denys and the later Platonisms we shall consider is a reaction against that. In speaking of von Balthasar and de Lubac, I have indicated some of the motives the twentieth-century return to the patristic and medieval sources of Catholic theology. Generally, they displayed a more intimate connection between theory and religious life than prevailed in what was called Roman Aristotelian–Thomistic philosophy, which looked like a modern rationalism, and they might, as a consequence, provide a way out of the ills of modernity.

In addition to the *ressourcement*, associated with the French Jesuit series *Sources chrétiennes* during the past century, with the major participation of Catholic clergy, the France of St Denys became the centre of Neoplatonic study. Stansilas Breton wrote of a personal move from Rome to Paris. Because of a French Neoplatonic priestly triad of Trouillard, Henry Duméry (1920–2012), and Joseph Combès (1920–2002) which he joined when he returned, the move became a symbol for what was happening in Catholic theology. These four, as well as André-Jean Festugière (1898-1982), Henry-Dominique Saffrey (born 1921), and others, positively reassessed the (p. 509) much denigrated Iamblichan–

Dionysian tradition where philosophy knew its need for revelation, religious cult, theurgy, and mysticism. Studies of Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, Damascius, the Greek Fathers, especially Denys, and Eriugena became the basis of philosophical and theological creativity among Catholics both inside and outside France. I have already named some of theologians; of these Jean-Luc Marion remains active. He, and those I have mentioned earlier, Werner Beierwaltes (born 1931), and many others, have been occupied with the challenges with which a German Catholic, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), confronted theology (for which see Fritz in this volume). Others sought in later Platonism, Christian and pagan, that for which Cusa aimed, a *rapprochement* with Eastern Orthodoxy, or an opening to Oriental mysticisms and religions, or a way of making Christian theology more incarnational and less caught in dualistic struggles. Some, like Trouillard and the group around him, acknowledge and embrace what they owe to pagan philosophers and theologians; others such as Marion deny the debt. This difference is both philosophically and theologically significant. It is a characteristic of Catholic theology not to deny its debt to philosophy and to require its study.

The notion that modernity was past or passing, produced the sense that neo-scholastic Thomism was inadequate; some thought this required leaving Aquinas out of a renewed Catholic theology. Many, however, wanted him included; this required showing how Augustinian, Dionysian, and Proclean he was. That consideration enables me to conclude with the name of one of the *peritii* of the Second Vatican Council, Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990). Since he, de Lubac, Yves Congar (1904-1995), Duméry, and Jean Daniélou (1905-1974), like Eriugena and others who brought Denys and Neoplatonism into Catholic theology through the centuries, suffered for doing so, justice demands that we close by remembering them. Hope for the future of Catholic theology requires observing that Neoplatonism and Dionysian spirituality are both vibrantly alive in the Catholic Church and developing new forms.

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Monastic Theology

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Abstract and Keywords

Monastic theology emerged in the very era that saw the great patristic bishop-theologians, from Athanasius to Augustine, and the great ecumenical councils, from Nicaea to Chalcedon. Monastic theologians certainly meditated on the big picture, but more as map-makers than systematicians. The theological task, as they conceived it, was to map precisely how the individual Christian journeys to God. Ultimately, it was a mode of theology that flowed from and flowed back into the practice of mystical contemplation. This chapter traces the history of monastic theology from John Cassian (d. 435) through the Venerable Bede (673–735) and on to Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153).

Keywords: monasticism, asceticism, spirituality, exegesis, John Cassian, Bede, Bernard of Clairvaux

MOST today think of theology as an academic enterprise, something done by university professors who write books and give lectures and by students who take notes and tests. Its favoured forums are the lecture hall or the seminar room where hard-nosed questioning, freewheeling debates, and standards of critical rationality hold sway. As an academic discipline, it is organized systematically, with well-defined categories and well-demarcated specialities. Theology for us is school-centred, ‘scholastic’ in the literal sense. This conception and this whole way of going about it is a medieval creation, first forged in the schools that sprang up in and around twelfth-century Paris (Evans 1980). Before this, for nearly 800 years, from the mid-fourth century to the mid-twelfth, an earlier mode of theologizing dominated, what Jean Leclercq in *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* famously called ‘monastic theology’.

Monastic theology emerged in the very era that saw the great patristic bishop-theologians, from Athanasius to Augustine, and the great ecumenical councils, from Nicaea to Chalcedon. When Christianity surfaced into legitimacy in the 310s, its ascetical and contemplative impulses surfaced as well, quickly assuming organized, even institutional, expression in the movement we now call monasticism. Those impulses had been there from the beginning, evident in the words and deeds both of Jesus and of Paul. Praying in deserts, fasting, celibacy, renunciation of family and wealth—these occupy a sizeable

place in the narratives and ethical teaching of the New Testament. The fourth century saw not only the surfacing of monasticism but also wide-ranging experiments in monastic lifestyles and widely varied self-understandings, a diversity better documented and appreciated thanks to research conducted over the last hundred years (Harmless 2008b). Some commonalities emerged. Monks defined themselves by renouncing 'the world': family, property, marriage, career. They embraced ascetical disciplines: fasting, vigils, poverty, celibacy. Most recited psalms at fixed hours, but also took to heart Paul's admonition to 'pray unceasingly' (1 Thess. 5:17), developing methods of interior prayer. Such disciplines and lifestyles were, from the outset, the focus of intense theological reflection. Monastic theology set out lofty ideals of personal virtue and of community life and diagnosed with clinical precision the varied spiritual maladies (p. 512) that impaired living out those ideals. It both sprang from and helped nurture prayerful meditation upon the Word of God. Ultimately, it was a mode of theology that flowed from and flowed back into the practice of mystical contemplation.

Given the weight of our inherited scholastic outlook, it requires a measure of historical imagination to reorient ourselves to monastic theology's distinctive concerns and literary styles, to savour its distinctive methods and contributions. To try to encapsulate so vast a time span and so rich a tradition in so brief a space, it seems better to emblemize than to generalize. This chapter focuses on three monastic theologians, each emblematic of his era and each a source and shaper of Catholic theology: John Cassian from the fifth century; Bede from the eighth; and Bernard of Clairvaux from the twelfth. Such a triptych will hopefully serve as an iconic pointer to wider trends and to other no less notable authors.

Wisdom of the Desert: John Cassian

Egypt has often been called the birthplace of monasticism. That is inexact. Scholars now stress that other regions—Syria, Palestine, Cappadocia—had their own traditions, as old as Egypt's. But Egypt's desert fathers captured the Western imagination, which saw in them the foundation and fountainhead of monastic life. Egypt's monks reflected deeply, even systematically, on their distinctive way of being Christian. They relied on a system of apprenticeship, with wisdom passed down orally, from master to disciple. One glimpses this oral tradition, its poignancy and perspicacity of insight, in the *Sayings of the Fathers* (*Apophthegmata Patrum*), an anthology of monastic dicta and anecdotes (Harmless 2004: 167–273). Its stories recount how an *abba*, or spiritual father, read the hearts of younger monks, diagnosing spiritual ills with prophetic insight. This anthology, translated into Latin by two sixth-century Roman clerics, Pelagius and John (perhaps the later Popes Pelagius and John) under the title *Words of the Old Men* (*Verba Seniorum*), came to symbolize the wisdom of the desert. The allure of Egypt for the Latin West appears also in a panegyric, *In Praise of the Desert*, composed by Eucherius of Lyons (d. 449):

> The desert deserves to be called God's temple-without-walls. Since it is clear that God dwells in silence, we must believe that he loves the solitary expanses of the desert … Although God is present everywhere and regards the whole world as his

> domain, we may believe that his preferred place is the solitudes of heaven and of the desert
>
> (*De laude eremi* 3; Cummings 1999: 199).

For Eucherius, since the desert was the privileged biblical venue for encountering God, it was only natural that monasticism took root there. Eucherius, however, had never visited Egypt. But his monastic colleague, John Cassian (d. 435), had.

(p. 513) Cassian, more than any other, translated Egyptian monastic theology for the Latin West (Stewart 1997; Harmless 2004: 373–409). Equally at ease in Greek and Latin, he became a monk in Bethlehem. In 385, he moved to Egypt, settling in Scetis, where he absorbed emerging monastic theologies, especially that of Evagrius Ponticus (d. 399). Evagrius, a disciple of the Cappadocians, became a monk in Jerusalem and moved to Kellia in Egypt, where he brilliantly translated and systematized Coptic spirituality for the Greek-speaking world, encapsulating its wisdom in chains of memorable proverbs (Harmless 2004: 311–371; Dysinger, 2005). Certain speculative elements of Evagrius's theology were condemned as Origenist by the Council of Constantinople in 553. Only in the twentieth century would his writings be recovered and recognized for their startling originality. Cassian drew deeply, but never uncritically, on Evagrius's formulations, passing on key insights to the Latin West (much as Maximus Confessor [*c*.580–662] did for the Greek East). In 399, Cassian left Egypt and, after stints in Constantinople (where John Chrysostom ordained him deacon) and in Rome (where he befriended Pope Leo the Great), he settled in Marseilles. There he composed two influential works: *Institutes* (*De institutis*), a treatise on principles of monastic life, and *Conferences* (*Collationes*), ostensibly a record of twenty-four conversations with leading desert fathers.

In the opening conference, Cassian sets out the purpose of monastic life. As his dialogue partner Abba Moses notes, monks endure great hardships—hunger from fasts, exhaustion from vigils, bleak poverty, desert heat, an anguishing solitude—because of a desired goal (*skopos, destinatio*) and an ultimate end (*telos, finis*). The monk's end is the same sought by all Christians: the kingdom of Heaven. But to find his way to the kingdom, the monk pursues a more proximate goal: purity of heart (*Collationes* 1.2–4). Cassian was attuned to Jesus' promise, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God' (Matt. 5:8), and stressed that the monk's vocation is to see God here and now, to glimpse, however briefly, heaven's life on earth:

> This, then, is the goal of the solitary, and this must be his whole intention—to deserve to possess the image of future blessedness in this body and as it were to begin to taste the pledge of that heavenly way of life and glory in this vessel. This, I say, is the end of the perfection—that the mind purged of every carnal desire may daily be elevated to spiritual things, until one's whole way of life and all the yearnings of one's heart become a single and continuous prayer
>
> (*Collationes* 10.7; Ramsey 1997: 376).

To arrive at purity of heart, the monk sought 'spiritual knowledge' (*scientia spiritualis*). This had two stages. Drawing on Evagrius, Cassian distinguished 'πρακτική, or the practical, which reaches its fulfillment in correction of behavior and in cleansing from vice', from 'θεωρητική, which consists in the contemplation of divine things and in the understanding of most sacred meanings' (*Collationes* 14.1; Ramsey 1997: 505). One core element of 'practical knowledge' was learning how to diagnose within the depths of one's heart the eight capital vices: gluttony, fornication, avarice, sadness, anger, 'weariness of heart' (*acēdia*), vainglory, and pride. Cassian drew this catalogue (p. 514) from Evagrius who had first singled out the eight and analysed their subtle interplay (Stewart 2005; Brakke 2006). Cassian's eight-vices scheme would exercise profound influence on Western theology. Modified as the 'seven deadly sins', it became a mainstay both of medieval moral theology, notably in Aquinas, and of medieval literature, most famously in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, where the seven sins defined the very geography of both the Inferno and the Purgatorio (Newhauser 2005). In elucidating this 'practical' mode, Cassian offered detailed analyses and reflections on asceticism. *Askēsis* was not self-denial for its own sake, let alone rejection of body; it was 'training' in the original athletic sense of the term. Monks were to bring a discipline of body, intensity of heart, and focus of mind comparable to what Olympic athletes brought to their craft (*De institutis* 5.17–19).

The second stage, 'contemplative knowledge', took as its starting point the monastic discipline of *lectio divina* (sacred reading). Monks meditated by reciting biblical texts aloud, often from memory, repeating them, chewing on them to extract their deeper meanings. Cassian, drawing on Origen, argued that the Bible possesses four 'senses' or levels of meaning: literal; allegorical (i.e. Old Testament prefigurations of Christ and Church); anagogical (i.e. foreshadowings of heaven's mysteries); and tropological (i.e. moral principles) (*Collationes* 14.18). Not every text has all four, but some do, and the Bible as a whole does. Cassian's four-senses scheme would become another of his influential legacies, providing a rationale and scaffolding for medieval biblical exegesis (Lubac 1959–1964). For Cassian, biblical meditation involved more than literary aptitude. Monks, he insisted, sought insights into the text made possible only by God's grace and by a lifetime of disciplined virtue and prayer: 'As our mind is increasingly renewed by this study, the face of Scripture will also begin to be renewed, and the beauty of a more sacred understanding will somehow grow with the person who is making progress' (*Collationes* 14.11; Ramsey 1997: 515).

Cassian linked purity of heart with *hesychia*, a deep stillness of mind. As he saw it, the mind enfleshed in the physical world is singularly unstable; the world, like a rushing river, spins the mind round and round so that we come to prayer dizzy, unfocused and decentred. Abba Isaac, another of Cassian's desert masters, thus recommended that a single verse, 'God, come to my help; Lord, hurry to my rescue' (Ps. 70:1), be repeated constantly, with every breath. This method gave the monk 'who longs for the continual awareness of God' a way to pray 'without ceasing in his heart' (*Collationes* 10.10; my translation). This verse was eventually adopted as the opening antiphon in the Latin litur-

gy of the hours, a token of Cassian's influence and reminder of the monastic commitment to unceasing prayer.

Cassian's contemplative orientation shaped his Christology. The monk is to journey 'with Christ to the lofty mountain of the desert' and, like the apostles who witnessed the Transfiguration, comes to 'see Christ's Godhead with purest eyes' (*Collationes* 10.6; Ramsey 1997: 375). The goal is union, a fulfilment of Christ's prayer at the Last Supper: 'That all may be one, as you Father are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us' (John 17:21). Cassian thus defined the climax of monastic theology:

(p. 515)

> This [union] will be the case when every love, every desire, every effort, every undertaking, every thought of ours, everything that we live, that we speak, that we breathe, will be God, and when that unity which the Father now has with the Son and which the Son has with the Father will be carried over into our understanding and our mind, so that, just as he loves us with a sincere and pure and indissoluble love, we too may be joined to him with a perpetual and inseparable love and so united with him that whatever we breathe, whatever we understand, whatever we speak, may be God
>
> (*Collationes* 10.7; Ramsey 1997: 375–376).

Prayer is thus more than words spoken to God or upsurges of heart or even graced moments of ecstasy; our very existence is to be a praying and a prayer that 'we … may be God'—in other words, *theosis*, 'deification'.

Cassian's monastic theology was mainstreamed in the Latin West in good part because Benedict in his *Rule* singled out Cassian's works, commending them to be read and studied by his monks (*Regula* 42.3–5; 73.5; Fry 1981: 242, 296). One glimpses in Cassian certain defining trends. Monastic theology, like patristic theology, remained innocent of later theological subdivisions and specializations; monastic writers moved rapidly, seamlessly, from scriptural exegesis to theological anthropology and moral theology to Christology and spirituality. Monastic theologians certainly meditated on the big picture, but more as map-makers than systematicians. The theological task, as they conceived it, was to map precisely how the individual Christian journeys to God. They were especially alert to demonic temptations and to our capacity for self-deception and highlighted how to spot and avoid pitfalls and wrong paths. Their map-making concerns sprang, in part, from pedagogy, from the experience of older monks guiding younger ones. It is no accident that Cassian's favoured literary form was the 'conference,' the dialogue between monk and monk. The end product of monastic theology was not writing books—even if monks happened to write them. Monastic theology was about the experience of prayer and about the God one experienced in prayer. As Cassian's mentor Evagrius tersely put it: 'If you are a theologian, you will pray truly; and if you pray truly, you will be a theologian' (*De oratione* 60; Sinkewicz 2003: 199).

The Honeycomb of Scripture: The Venerable Bede

Bede (673–735) is remembered today as a historian, not a theologian. While his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* may seem a work of history, a theological purpose undergirds it (Thacker 2010). He casts his work as a sequel to Eusebius of Caesarea's *History of the Church* with the intent of weaving the history of the *gens Anglorum*, 'the English people', into the worldwide Christian history of salvation. A master storyteller, Bede recounts a decisive moment in his nation's conversion to Christianity. Around (p. 516) 627, King Edwin of Northumbria, after listening to Paulinus, the missionary-bishop of Canterbury, weighed whether or not to accept baptism. A senior advisor offered the king a parable:

> This, O King, is how human life on earth appears to me: … You sit feasting with your nobles and thanes in wintertime. The fire burns in the hearth in the middle of the hall and everything inside is warm, while outside wintry storms of rain and snow rage. A sparrow darts swiftly through the hall, entering one door, then quickly flies out the other. For the few moments it is inside, the storm and winter winds cannot touch it, but after the briefest calm, it flits from your sight, out again into the wintry storm. So too this human life of ours lasts but a moment. As for what follows or even what went before, we know nothing at all. If this new doctrine brings us more certain information, it seems right that we should accept it
>
> (*Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* II.13; Colgrave and Mynors 1969: 182–185, translation altered).

For Bede, this parable bespoke the deepest existential meaning of the Christian Gospel. In a world where life was often brutal and brief, Christianity lit up the darkness, illuminating who we are, where we come from, and where we are going.

Bede belonged to the monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow in Northumbria, on England's north-eastern coast. It had been a recent foundation, begun in 674 by a local nobleman, Benedict Biscop. As abbot, Biscop journeyed regularly to the Continent and Rome, bringing back all manner of valuables. These included icons with which he decorated his monastery's churches from wall to wall so that, according to Bede, 'even those who could not read were able, whichever way they looked, to contemplate the dear face of Christ and His saints' (*Historia abbatum* 6; Farmer 1983: 191). Bede, writing just as the Iconoclastic Controversy was exploding in the Greek East, consciously echoes Gregory the Great's (pope 590–604) classic reprimand to iconoclasts: religious paintings are books for the illiterate (*Ep.* XI.10). Biscop also brought back from his travels something even more precious: books. Wearmouth-Jarrow had one of the finest libraries in early medieval Europe, something Bede exploited to the full. One treasure was the Codex Grandior, a magnificent Bible created at Cassiodorus's Vivarium. Bede became a monk in a way common in the Middle Ages: At age seven, he became an oblate, donated by relatives to the monastery's care. At age nineteen, he was ordained deacon, and at age thirty, priest. Ear-

ly on, he served as a teacher, a task that led him to compose textbooks on basic Latin (*On Orthography*) and Latin poetry (*Art of Poetry, Figures of Rhetoric*).

Put simply, for Bede, theology was exegesis, and exegesis was theology. At the end of his *Ecclesiastical History*, he appended a list of his writings, the fruit of his life's work, placing at the very top his sixteen biblical commentaries. He also added a revealing autobiographical note:

> I have spent all my life in this monastery, applying myself entirely to the study of the Scriptures; and amid the observance of the discipline of the Rule and the daily task of singing in the church, it has always been my delight to learn or to teach or (p. 517) to write … From the time I became priest until the fifty-ninth year of my life I have made it my business, for my own benefit and that of my brothers, to make brief extracts from the works of the venerable fathers on the holy Scriptures, or to add notes of my own to clarify their sense and interpretation
>
> (*Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* V.24; Colgrave and Mynors 1969: 567).

To say that the Bible is the heart of Christian theology is a truism. But Bede's career and writings offer striking testimony of the many and varied ways he applied himself 'entirely to the study of the Scriptures', ways emblematic of how the monastic theological tradition made the Bible its heart.

One expression was very concrete: Bede and his fellow monks at Wearmouth-Jarrow were skilled calligraphers who created one of the finest illuminated Bibles of the Middle Ages, the Codex Amiatinus (Chazelle 2006). It was a pandect, or 'one-volume' Bible, one of three commissioned by Bede's Abbot Ceolfrith (fragments of the other two also survive). In 716, Ceolfrith carried it on a final pilgrimage, intending it as a gift to the pope and a proclamation that the Christian mission had reached the ends of the earth. Codex Amiatinus is the earliest extant version we have of Jerome's complete Vulgate. If for the desert monks the cell was the privileged venue for doing theology, then for Bede and his colleagues it was the scriptorium. As he told Acca, Bishop of Hexham, 'I myself am at once author (*dictator*), stenographer (*notarius*), and copyist (*librarius*)' (*In Lucam*, prol.; my translation). Bede thought of this 'laborious work' as Cassiodorus had: a preaching not with voice, but 'with the hand, to set tongues free with one's fingers and in silence to give mankind salvation' (*Institutiones* I.30.1; Halporn 2004: 163).

Bede's biblical commentaries included, as he noted, 'extracts from the works of the venerable Fathers'. His commentary on Paul's letters was just that: a compilation of extracts from Augustine. Generally, though, Bede's works were much more than *catenae*. A skilled pedagogue, he chose his extracts shrewdly and arranged them artfully, weaving them with his own lucid comments. He spoke of his exegesis as 'following in the footsteps of the Fathers' (*uestigia patrum sequens*) (*In regum XXX quaestiones*, prol.). This highlights a core value and starting point of monastic theology: its reverence for the patristic inheritance. Bede was the first to single out as the four Fathers of the Latin Church: Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great (*In Lucam*, prol.). In his commentaries on Luke

and Mark, whenever he quoted these four, in the manuscript's margin, he inscribed a two-letter abbreviation (AM = Ambrose, AV = Augustine, GR = Gregory, HR = Jerome), the first letter signalling the quotation's beginning, the second, its end. Partly this was self-defence, 'lest it be said that I steal the words of those who have gone before me by offering them as my own' (*In Lucam*, prol.; Holder 2010: 147). Bede's method may seem to foreshadow footnoting; however, his marginal abbreviations cite the person, not the work, and thus subtly lend authority to the authors themselves. Patristic literature, as it had come down to Bede, was a sprawling array of texts and a cacophony of voices. Bede sought both to harmonize that diversity and to harmonize himself with what he found. By such methods, Bede and the Carolingian scholars who imitated him subtly helped create the very notion of 'Church Fathers,' and (p. 518) the choices they made of whom to copy and what to extract helped define the patristic canon (Kaczynski 2001, 2006).

While his commentaries on Genesis, Mark, and Luke included harvests of patristic exegesis, other works lacked patristic precedent. Bede sought both to continue and round off the patristic project by commenting on books the Fathers had neglected, such as the seven Catholic epistles and Ezra-Nehemiah. Bede shared Origen's and Augustine's fondness for spiritual exegesis, noting 'when the bark of the text is peeled back, something deeper and more sacred [is found] in the marrow of the spiritual sense' (*In Ezram*, prol.; DeGregorio 2006: 1). Bede was well aware of Cassian's scheme of Scripture's 'four senses' and, on occasion, offered his own fourfold exegeses (e.g. *De tabernaculo* I.30; *In Cantica* III. 4.10). But his usual practice was to distinguish only two levels, a literal and another he identified variously as 'spiritual', 'typic', 'figurative', or 'mystical' (Holder 1994: xvi; Brown 2009: 37).

Bede was especially drawn to biblical topography. He was not interested in geography for geography's sake; he was a cartographer of the spirit convinced that Scripture provided a God-given map whose intricate symbols, if read right, offered guidance for one's pilgrimage to the heavenly homeland and the vision of God. Bede's project is clearest in two unprecedented commentaries, *On the Tabernacle* (*De tabernaculo*) and *On the Temple* (*De templo*). These offer phrase-by-phrase analyses of texts from Exodus and 3 Reigns (the LXX version of 1Kings) Bede's exegesis plunges readers into a world of multilayered symbols, knit to one another by correspondences whose filigree link past and present and eternity. Often arcane and exotic minutiae arrested his attention: why the tabernacle's table was of acacia wood, why gold rings at its four corners, why nut-shaped cups, why seven lamps, why snuffers. For Bede, God is in the details. Such details are like tiny portals or entryways that open up into vistas that allow one to glimpse the epic landscapes of salvation history and its pivot point, the Christ event. Bede the monastic theologian was concerned to plot out his and his readers' way to God, and the Tabernacle and Temple stood out as privileged sites of divine presence. He read Exodus carefully. The original Tabernacle, he realized, had not been carried about the desert nor had the original Temple been situated in Jerusalem. Those were later, earthly copies. God revealed the heavenly originals to Moses amid Mount Sinai's dark clouds, where, as Bede notes, 'on the height of most secret contemplation [Moses] openly learned the manifold sacraments of Christ and

the Church'. This led Bede to reflect on his task as theologian, as a 'scribe instructed in the kingdom of Heaven':

> The scribe looks diligently at the pattern that was shown to him on the mountain [of contemplation] and makes things according to it when he returns to the regions below, for those things which by the sublimity of the divine word he inwardly understands are to be believed or done he considers earnestly in his heart, and shows their perpetual exemplar to his hearers both by the performance of right action and by the word of saving doctrine
>
> (*De tabernaculo* I.70; Holder (1994): 44).

(p. 519) Scripture offered a map to God's presence which, if followed, opened one to the Mosaic experience of climbing contemplative heights. The theological task did not end with ascent. Bede the kingdom-scribe had to come down, as Moses had, from the mountain 'to the regions below' and put experience into words and deeds. Contemplation, as Bede saw it, was integral to service of the Church, to its ministry of preaching and teaching.

Carolingian scholars nicknamed Bede 'The Venerable' and widely disseminated his works, which were later extracted in the twelfth-century *Glossa ordinaria*. Peter Lombard, whose *Sentences* became the textbook of medieval scholasticism, quoted Bede more than any other post-patristic author. Bede was also a favourite of Aquinas, who in his *Catena aurea* excerpts Bede nearly 600 times. In 1899, Pope Leo XIII declared Bede a 'doctor of the Church'.

Bede encapsulates how monastic theology oriented itself to texts, how it sprang from *meditatio*, from texts read and memorized, ruminated on and prayed over, joining, as Leclercq aptly put it, a love of learning and a desire for God. Like other monastic writers, Bede conceived theology, in part, as *ressourcement*, as sorting through a vast and sometimes unwieldy patristic inheritance, uncovering and passing on nuggets of wisdom. It is no accident that Bede, like many monastic theologians, favoured the biblical commentary as a preferred theological genre. The commentary privileges the Bible's own wording, its categories, even its word order. Commentary allowed monastic theologians to celebrate what they found in the text, an overflow of sweetness. As Bede once put it:

> [T]he spiritual sense of the Divine Scriptures … is rightly called a dripping honeycomb; for a honeycomb drips when it has more honey than its wax chambers can hold, doubtless because the fecundity of the Holy Scriptures is such that a verse which was written in a short line fills many pages if one squeezes it by careful examination to see how much sweetness of spiritual understanding it contains inside
>
> (*In Cantica Cantorum* III.4.10; Holder 2011: 125).

In Love With Love: Bernard of Clairvaux

The twelfth century, the very era in which scholastic theology came to birth, also witnessed a remarkable flowering of monastic theology. Its gifted thinkers were many and varied: Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109), Rupert of Deutz (d. 1129), William of St-Thierry (d. 1148), Peter the Venerable (d. 1156), Aelred of Rievaulx (d. 1166), Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179). But none dominated the era the way Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) did. He was born in Burgundy near Dijon. At age twenty-three, he entered the monastery of Cîteaux—along with thirty relatives and friends he himself had recruited. Cîteaux had been founded a few years earlier by Robert of Molesme who envisioned it as a noble (p. 520) experiment to restore monasticism to its primitive origins. It became the fountainhead for a new European-wide order, the Cistercians, who came to dominate the twelfth century much as Cluny had dominated the tenth and eleventh centuries. At age twenty, Bernard was chosen abbot of Clairvaux, Cîteaux's fourth foundation. This became his base of operations, but he spent much time on the road, applying his formidable oratorical skills to recruit members for the burgeoning order. In later years, Bernard moved on the world stage. In the disputed papal election of 1130, he threw his support to Innocent II, and for the next eight years did much to secure Innocent's recognition. In 1145, one of Bernard's own disciples was elected as Pope Honorius III. Honorius, in turn, enlisted Bernard's recruiting skills to preach the Second Crusade. It proved a military disaster and for a time damaged Bernard's reputation.

Bernard has often been cast as an opponent of scholastic theology. That is inexact. The perception comes mainly from his clash with Peter Abelard (d. 1143). Abelard had been a bold, often flamboyant, pioneer of scholastic methods, famous for his sharp-edged applications of dialectic to theology (Clanchy 1999: 266–287; Mews 2005: 123–144). He also did much to popularize the term *theologia*, a loan-word from Greek found in Boethius and in Latin translations of Pseudo-Dionysius (Chenu 1957: 108–156). Abelard entitled his controversial work on the Trinity in its successive versions *Theologia 'Summi Boni', Theologia Christiana, Theologia 'Scholarium'*. To Bernard and other conservative thinkers, the word was not only an odd import but had pagan overtones, since Augustine in *City of God* associated it with pagan myth-makers. In letters to leading churchmen, Bernard mocked Abelard as 'our theologian' and spoke of Abelard's work as 'theology, or rather "stupid-ology" (*stultilogia*)' (*ep.* 190.2,9; my translation). Due to Bernard's polemics and lobbying, certain of Abelard's theses were condemned at the Council of Sens in 1141, then by Innocent II. Peter the Venerable stepped in, offered Abelard asylum at Cluny, and effected a reconciliation. This complex episode was, in part, a volatile clash of personalities and personal alliances, fuelled by misattributions of texts and misreadings of motives (Clanchy 1997: 288–325; Mews 2005: 226–249). But one important thread was a dispute over the task of theology. In a letter to Guy of Castello (later Pope Celestine II), Bernard complained: 'Master Peter in his books imports phrases novel and profane both in wording and in meaning. He argues about the faith against faith … He sees nothing "through a mirror darkly', but views everything "face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12) tromping into great matters and into marvels beyond himself' (*Ep.* 192; my translation). For Bernard, theology

meant respecting mystery. Abelard's methods seemed to submit God's Word to secular analytics and to flatten the required paradoxes of Trinitarian doctrine. Bernard was not opposed to scholasticism as such. He counted skilled scholastics among his friends, men such as William of Champeaux, Hugh of St Victor, and Peter Lombard. Bernard opposed any theology that, in his mind, undercut the mystery of God.

For Bernard, theology and eloquence were inextricably linked. While he favoured traditional formulae, he brought a freshness of expression and warmth that made his writings deeply attractive. Once, when asked to compose liturgical texts for a new feast, he eloquently belittled his own eloquence, then spelled out the theologian's task:

(p. 521)

> How little is my genius and eloquence that one should single me out to ask for texts for celebration and praise … To want to add something to the heavenly praises is to detract from them … There is room here only for the authentic and the traditional which edifies the Church and bears the stamp of her dignity. If something new is to be heard, because the situation requires it those things are to be used which will please the hearts of the hearers and be useful to them … Furthermore, the texts must be clear, shining forth with unclouded truth, proclaiming justice, urging humility, teaching equity. They should bring forth truth in our minds, virtue in our action; crucify our vices, inflame devotion, and discipline our senses
>
> (*Ep.* 398.2; Cawley 1970: 180–181).

While Bernard cast himself as a traditionalist, he added innovative touches. In his Christology, he laid deep stress on Christ's human affectivity, arguing that because the human heart had become carnal, God entered into the depths of the human condition in order 'to recapture the affections of carnal beings who were unable to live in any other way, by first drawing them to the salutary love of his own humanity, and then gradually raising them to a spiritual love' (*SCC* 20.6; Walsh 1971: 152). Bernard could boldly imply that God, while omniscient, learned something new by entering into human suffering: 'he began to know the miseries of the flesh by that mode of cognition which the weakness of the flesh instructs' for he 'wanted to experience for himself what [humans] were suffering' (*De gradibus humilitatis* 3.12; Evans 1987: 110–111; on this see also Gilson 1940: 76–78). Bernard was also at the forefront of promoting devotion to the Virgin Mary and was among the first to speak of Mary as 'mediatrix' (e.g. *Sermo in adventu Domini* 2.5; Edmonds 2008: 17). At the same time, he famously opposed inaugurating the feast of the Immaculate Conception, arguing that the teaching and feast were unsupported novelties (*Ep.* 174).

Bernard's theology was a preached theology. His masterpiece was a collection of eighty-six *Sermons on the Song of Songs* (*Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* = *SCC*), composed between 1135 and 1153. The Bible's Song of Songs is a passionate love poem and marriage song, full of imagery both exotic and erotic. From Origen onward, it had been read as allegory, interpreted collectively as Christ's love for his bride, the Church, and in-

dividually as God's love for the individual soul. Bernard was convinced that the Song's theme—the passions of the wedding night—provided the best analogy for describing the human encounter with the divine: 'When the soul loves perfectly, she is wedded to the Word … Truly this is a spiritual contract, a holy marriage … an embrace where identity of will makes of two one spirit' (*SCC* 83.3; Edmonds 1980: 182). Mystical union, Bernard insisted, was not a swallowing up of the finite human into the divine infinity; nor was it the same as the union of Christ and the Father who 'have and are one substance'; with human beings, this union is 'not so much by the identity of essences as by the concurrence of wills' (*SCC* 71.8; Edmonds 1980: 54). While a marriage, 'there is no betrothal or union of equals here' (*SCC* 67.8; Edmonds 1980: 12); God initiates everything so that the soul realizes that 'He was her lover before He was her beloved' (*SCC* 45.8; Walsh 1976: 238). Bernard's sermons made the metaphor of 'mystical marriage' a commonplace in Western religious literature.

(p. 522) Medieval theology spoke of two holy books, the Bible and the 'book of creation,' ones that allowed humankind to read and know who God is. Bernard argued that there was a third: 'the book of experience' (*SCC* 3.1). In a sermon addressed to clerics in Paris, he contrasted the book-learning of the schools with the mystical encounters that monastic life made possible, that they 'need not look it up in the pages of a book'; 'Look to experience instead' (*De conversione* 13.25; Evans 1987: 85). This appeal to personal experience, to its authority, appears repeatedly, in varied ways, in his works. In his *Sermons on the Song*, he insisted God's Wisdom may begin speaking to us exteriorly 'as a teacher in a lecture-hall', but by progress in the spiritual life one is invited into the 'bedroom': 'Instruction makes us learned, experience makes us wise' (*SCC* 23.14: Walsh 1976: 37). He linked the biblical and the experiential: 'only personal experience can unfold [the Song of Songs'] meaning. Let those who are versed in the mystery revel in it; let all others burn with desire to attain this experience rather than merely learn about it' (*SCC* 1.11; Walsh 1971: 6–7). Bernard made experience a central epistemological principle and deserves credit for introducing it into the vocabulary of Western mystical theology (Verdeyen 1992; Harmless 2008a).

For Bernard, theological anthropology was an abiding concern. If, as he believed, we can experience God, then there must be something about our human nature that makes such experience even a possibility. Genesis 1:26 speaks of human beings as made in God's 'image' and 'likeness'; Bernard took the two terms and differentiated them. Because we are in God's 'image', we possess an inherent nobility, a sacred dignity. This 'image' is impossible to lose. We thus bear a natural 'affinity' (*affinitas*) to God and so are drawn to God by the deepest core of our identity as human beings (*SCC* 80.2. See Casey 1988: 164). While our status as 'images' is irrevocable, our 'likeness' to God is not, at least not on the far side of Adam's fall. Sin has made us unlike God. Adam originally had the ability not to sin; we are unable to avoid it. Our likeness to God has become marred, covered over by sin's crass graffiti. In the beginning, God made human beings like himself, 'upright' (*rectitudo*). While other animals walk on all fours, humans walk upright. Our bodies, Bernard notes, are symbols of what we should be: we walk upright, we should be upright in spirit. Because of sin, we suffer spiritual 'curvature'; we are bent souls in upright bodies, literally,

walking contradictions (*SCC* 24.5–6; Walsh 1976: 46. See also Gilson 1940: 51–54). In our unlikeness, we have wandered off into a land of unlikeness and know neither God nor ourselves. Sin means losing God and, at the same time, our very identity.

No matter how anguished our current plight, the nobility of our nature, Bernard argued, offers hope. As the soul turns back to God, it both turns back to itself and turns back into its true self. The recovery of our original 'likeness' is what 'marries the soul to the Word': 'it is like him in nature, but it shows that it wants to be like him by loving as it is loved' (SCC 83.2; Evans 1987: 271). To be oneself is to be in love with Love. For Bernard, God is love in the absolute sense: love is God's very substance. Since God is love and since we are made in God's image, then we are by nature lovers. Nothing is more natural to us than loving:

(p. 523)

> Love is its own merit and its own reward. Love needs no cause, no fruit besides itself; its enjoyment is its use. I love because I love; I love that I may love. Love is a great thing; as long as it returns to its beginning, goes back to its origin, turns again to its source, it will always draw afresh from it and flow freely
>
> (SCC 83.4; Evans 1987: 272).

We love because we are lovers; we do what we are. As lovers, we love Love, love God, the original lover.

Bernard was canonized in 1174 and declared a Doctor of the Church by Pius VIII in 1830. Pius XII later honoured him in the encyclical *Doctor mellifluus* (1953), as did John Paul II in his letter *Schola caritatis* (1990). Bernard may have mocked the neologism 'theologian', but his own secretary Geoffrey of Auxerre acclaimed him 'that great theologian' (*magnus ille theologus*) citing the *Sermons on the Song* as proof (Leclercq 1953: 16). We saw how Cassian used the genre of the conference and how Bede used that of the biblical commentary. Bernard's work exemplifies a third favoured genre of monastic theology: the sermon. Sermons are theology for the ear. Words not only have meanings; they have sounds. Gifted monastic preachers such as Bernard could make words sing. Bernard's ear had been tuned by the monastic discipline of *lectio divina*, and one can hear in the music of his words echoes of a hundred other voices, from the Psalms to Paul to Augustine to Gregory the Great, yet the voice remains his own. For Bernard and the monastic theological tradition, theology is inherently rhetorical. Rhetoric is vastly more than well-crafted style. Sermons speak to live audiences, and able preachers keep their gaze fixed on their hearers, seeking not only to instruct minds but also to stir hearts —and the stirring of hearts matters when hearers are to be guided to a God who is Love. In the generations after Bernard, when scholastic theology came into ascendancy, another discourse took hold: scholasticism honed razor-sharp precisions and voiced itself in dense, philosophically exact logic. It sought to be scientific. Its favoured genres were the *quaestio* and the disputation (Chenu 1957: 323–350). The music of words receded; theology and spirituality parted ways; experience and the heart lost their privileged place in the

discourse. Monastic theology saw things differently. For Bernard and other monastic theologians, words, especially the Bible's words, were wonderfully inexact, multiple in meaning, and, most of all, beautiful. They were signs whose images brimmed with divine life and echoed with hidden music. Bernard the preacher used to call his hearers to listen not to his voice but to God's, to a voice that echoed in the depths of the human heart. 'The difficulty', he noted 'is to shut your ears to it. The voice speaks up; it makes itself heard … Listen to the inner voice; use the eyes of the heart, and you will learn by experience' (*De conversion* 3-4; Evans 1987: 67–69).

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Monastic Theology

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Thomas and Scholasticism to 1870

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Abstract and Keywords

The present article treats the life and works of Thomas Aquinas and his reception within the scholastic traditions up to 1879 (Aeterni Patris). The first two sections introduce the life and works of Thomas Aquinas, with a particular focus on the Scriptum and the Summa theologiae. The third section treats Thomas's reception up through 1500, looking at the initial period of condemnation in the late thirteenth century. This is followed by his canonization and acceptance as a theological authority in the fourteenth century and the gradual development of the Thomist schools of the fifteenth century. The fourth and fifth sections examine the reception of Thomas's thought in the era of Church reform and the baroque period (1500–1650), and from 1650 until Aeterni Patris (1879) respectively.

Keywords: Thomas Aquinas, scholasticism, medieval theology, Summa theologiae, philosophy, Thomism

Life and Works of Aquinas

THOMAS Aquinas was born in 1224/25 in Roccasecca, a small town near Aquino, midway between Naples and Rome. His father Lundulf was the count of the Aquino commune. When Thomas was five years old he was sent to the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino, the ancient abbey founded by Benedict of Nursia in 529. For the next ten years Thomas was educated by the Benedictines and introduced to the rhythms of monastic life. In 1239, he was sent to Naples to study the liberal arts. This period was formative, in particular because Thomas was first introduced to the Order of Preachers (the Dominican Order) during his time in Naples, and against the wishes of his family, who imagined him as part of the traditional Benedictine Order, Thomas secretly joined the Dominicans in 1244.

Thomas's education within the Dominican Order began at Paris in 1245. While there, he was introduced to Albert the Great (OP, d. 1280) and in 1248 followed the *Doctor universalis* to Cologne (Torrell 2005b: 18–35). Thomas continued his studies in philosophy and theology under Albert, a scholar with an encyclopedic knowledge of the liberal arts, the natural sciences, and theology. And, while Thomas had clearly been introduced to the

teachings of Aristotle earlier as a student of the liberal arts, there can be no doubt that Albert's profound engagement with Aristotle had a significant influence on Thomas's philosophical and theological development. Thomas remained at the newly instituted Dominican *studium* (school) in Cologne as an assistant to Albert throughout his formation; he returned to Paris in 1252 to continue his studies in theology.

Paris I (1252–1259)

Thomas was sent to Paris to pursue a masters of *sacra doctrina* between 1252 and 1259. Between 1252 and 1254, the young Dominican lectured on Peter Lombard's (d. 1160) four (p. 529) books of *Sentences*, eventually preparing them for publication in 1256 (Aquinas, *Scriptum* 1929–47).

Having completed his lectures on the Lombard, Thomas became a master of theology in 1256 and commenced, according to the statutes of the University of Paris, with his lectures on the Bible. It is not known precisely which biblical books Thomas lectured on as a *Magister in sacra pagina*, although it is probable that the lectures treated some of the Pauline epistles (Torrell 2005b: 54–59). Alongside his lectures on the Bible, the master was also expected to engage in both ordinary and disputed questions: the former being private lectures held in the afternoon, the latter were open public lectures held twice a year at Lent and Advent. Between 1256 and 1259, Thomas held both ordinary and public lectures. Some of his ordinary lectures have been preserved as *On Truth*, while his public lectures during this period have been collected as *Quodlibeta* VII–XI (Torrell 2005b: 334–337). Finally, while various other works can be attributed to this period of Thomas's career, one work that stands out is his commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate* (Torrell 2005b: 345). This work is exceptional, because it is one of Thomas's most developed accounts of the various sciences.

Italy (1259–1268)

After he completed his studies at Paris, Thomas travelled to Naples (*c.*1259-61), Orvieto (1261–65), and Rome (1265–68) on business relating to the Dominican Order. First, in Naples, and subsequently in Orvieto and Rome, Thomas was intimately involved with furthering Dominican education. He was engaged in teaching young brothers theology in preparation for their ministries in preaching, teaching, and hearing confessions, and in Rome, he began the difficult process of rethinking the theological curriculum in the *studium* at Santa Sabina.

Throughout his time in Naples and Orvieto, Thomas completed one of his most significant theological works, the *Summa contra gentiles*. The work, which is divided into four books, was probably begun in Paris (*c.*1259) but finished in Orvieto (*c.*1265) (Torrell 2005b: 96–116). The first three books treat God and creation as accessible to human reason. The first book of the *Summa contra* contains 102 chapters and analyses the existence of God and his divine perfections and attributes. The second book (101 chapters) turns to the procession of creatures, in particular rational creatures, from God; the emphasis, there-

fore, is on both God as creator (God's power) and creation (especially humanity). Book three is the longest (163 chapters) and examines God's providence in the sense of the ordering of rational creatures to God. Building on the previous discussion of God and creatures, this third book treats the complex relationship between God and creatures by means of God's divine governance. Finally, the fourth book (97 chapters) examines the truths of God that are known through faith (God's divine revelation) and are inaccessible to unaided human reason. Thus, book four considers the triune nature of God and the incarnation of the Word.

The years Thomas spent in Naples and Orvieto were incredibly productive. He quickly rose to prominence as a teacher and theologian within the Order of Preachers; evidence (p. 530) of this, Torrell notes, is found in the numerous works composed during this period that were written in response to a particular need of the Church or the order (e.g. *Contra errores Graecorum*) (Torrell 2005b: 122–127).

In 1265 the provincial chapter sent Thomas to Rome with the charge of organizing a *studium* at Santa Sabina. During his time at Santa Sabina—and, arguably, as a result of rethinking the theological curriculum organized around the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard—Thomas began to work on his most significant theological work, the *Summa theologiae* (Boyle 1982). Thomas was intimately familiar with the *Sentences* after lecturing on them at Paris and rewriting those lectures as a published work (the *Scriptum*); Thomas returned again to the *Sentences* around 1265, but with increasing dissatisfaction. While the subject of some scholarly dispute, it is probable that Thomas's lectures on the *Sentences* at Santa Sabina survive and provide evidence of his final engagement with the Lombard's text (Aquinas 2006). What is clear is that sometime around the mid 1260s Thomas became increasingly dissatisfied with the *Sentences* as a theological textbook and began the *Summa theologiae*; he completed the *prima pars* before he left for Paris in 1268.

Paris II (1268–1272)

While the precise date of Thomas's return to Paris has been the subject of considerable debate, what is not disputed is that the four years he spent in Paris between 1268 and 1272 were some of his most productive. He returned as a teacher of *sacra pagina* and completed some of his most impressive commentaries on the Bible during this period. For example, Thomas lectured on the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of John, the Book of Job and the Epistles of Paul between 1268 and 1271/2 (Torrell 2005b: 197–201, 339–340).

Beyond his lecturing on various books of the Christian Old and New Testaments, Thomas also engaged in scholastic debates and continued his work on the *Summa theologiae*. Thus, to this period belong some of his most important disputed and quodlibetal questions (questions *de quolibet* or on anything whatsoever) (Torrell 2005b: 201–212) as well as the magisterial *secunda pars* (second part) of the *Summa* (*c.*1271–72). Further, upon completing the *secunda pars*, Thomas began work on the *tertia pars*.

Torrell notes that during this period one can also place several occasional tracts that resulted from either consultations or disputes and numerous commentaries on Aristotle. In particular, *On the Eternity of the World* was written in Paris during a dispute with the future archbishop of Canterbury, John Peckham (d. 1292). Further, we would be remiss not to mention that during this period Thomas also composed several significant commentaries on the works of Aristotle, including: *Peri hermeneias, Posterior analytics, Ethics, Physics*, and *Metaphysics* (Torrell 2005b: 224–233).

Naples (1272–1273) and the End

Thomas left Paris in the spring of 1272 and a few months later the Roman chapter of the order requested that he organize a new *studium generale*. The order had previously (p. 531) designated Naples and Orvieto as desirable locations, thus Thomas began organizing a new *studium* in Naples. In the autumn of 1272, Thomas began teaching again for what would be the last year and a half of his life; the subject of his attention was Paul's letter to the Romans. Beyond the lectures on Romans, the other work that Thomas clearly concentrated on while regent-master at Naples is the *tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae*. It is also probable that he wrote sections of his commentary on the Psalms during this period (Torrell 2005b: 250–261).

Thomas continued to teach up to 6 December 1273. On this date—according to his confessor and companion Reginald of Piperno (OP, d. *c.*1290)—Thomas ceased his literary work stating that he could 'do no more'. Having been summoned to attend the Second Council of Lyon in February, Thomas began the trek from Naples to Lyon. He never arrived and died 7 March 1274 at the Cistercian Abbey in Fossanova.

The above sketch touches on Thomas's most significant theological works. Those interested in a complete list of his writings should consult the 'Suggested Reading' at the end of this chapter. Here, we will turn our attention to his two most significant theological works: the commentary on the *Sentences* (the *Scriptum*) and the *Summa theologiae*.

The *Scriptum* and *Summa Theologiae*

In the early thirteenth century, Alexander of Hales (OFM, d. 1245) and Richard Fishacre (OP, d. 1248) introduced the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard into the theological curricula at the University of Paris and the University of Oxford respectively. The Lombard's *Sentences* collected together theological statements of the Patristic Fathers into four books, treating: (1) the triune God; (2) creation; (3) Christ and his work; and (4) the sacraments of the Church and the last things (Lombard 1971–1981). Thomas's first comprehensive theological work is known as the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* (literally, a writing or commentary on the books of *Sentences*) and originated with his Parisian lectures. This work is a massive treatise (*c.*1.5 million words) on theology that follows the formal order of doctrine established by Peter Lombard. Throughout his lectures, Thomas drew on the

previous commentaries on the *Sentences* by his teacher Albert the Great and the Franciscan Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (d. 1274).

Years later while teaching at the Dominican *studium* in Rome (1265–66), Thomas would lecture again on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard: it is probable that these lectures have been preserved in the margins of a manuscript containing Thomas's *Scriptum* that is now housed in Lincoln College, Oxford (Aquinas 2006). This work—called the *Lectura romana* by the editors—presents Thomas's final attempt to comment on the *Sentences*. The work breaks off less than halfway through book I and betrays—according to the editors L. E. Boyle and J. F. Boyle—Thomas's dissatisfaction with the order of theology. Regardless of the authenticity of the *Lectura romana*, it is certain that as he began his magisterial *Summa theologiae* Thomas was increasingly dissatisfied with the Lombardian order of theology. In the prologue to the *Summa* Thomas writes that (p. 532) previous textbooks (i.e. the *Sentences*) are not adequate for teaching Christian theology because they have 'not taught according to the order of the subject matter' (*non traduntur secundum ordinem disciplinae*) (*ST* I, prol.). Thomas's frustration with the structure of the *Sentences* is evident throughout the *Summa*.

The *Summa* is divided into three parts, with the second part being further subdivided into two. The first part (*prima pars*) consists of two sections: the first section (*ST* I, qq.2–43) examines the nature of God, the second section (*ST* I, qq.44–119) the procession of creatures from God. Further, the treatise on God is divided into a discussion of the divine nature according to the unity of the divine essence (qq.2–26) and according to the distinction of persons (qq.27–43). Here is Thomas's first significant deviation from the *Sentences*; book I of the *Sentences* begins with a discussion of the trinitarian nature of God (*Sent*. I, dd.4–34) before treating questions relating to the unity of the divine essence (*Sent*. I, dd.35–48). While this is to oversimplify the Lombard—who is neither as consistent in his method nor as systematic as Thomas—it is accurate to note that broadly speaking, Thomas adopts an Aristotelian approach (more on this later) to the treatise on God and favours a *de Deo uno/de Deo trino* presentation of the material. Further, whereas the Lombard presented God and creation in two distinct books, Thomas closely links the nature of God and creatures that proceed from Him.

While the first part of the *Summa* treats God and creatures, the second and third parts examine the return of rational creatures to God as their end. The two parts of the 'second part' treat the movement to God by human acts in general (*ST* I–II, i.e. *prima secundae*) and in particular (*ST* II–II, i.e. *secunda secundae*): by 'general' Thomas means the nature of happiness (*ST* I–II, qq.1–5), human acts (*ST* I–II, qq.6–48) and their intrinsic (*ST* I–II, qq.49– 89) and extrinsic principles (*ST* I–II, qq.90–114); by 'particular' Thomas means the nature of the theological (*ST* II–II, qq.1–46) and cardinal virtues (*ST* II–II, qq.47–170). The second part of the *Summa* (i.e. *ST* I–II and II–II) is a magisterial work in and of itself, and when compared with the *Sentences* it represents Thomas's greatest divergence—and ultimately his greatest contribution—to the genre of the theological textbook in the High Middle Ages. The Lombard's treatment of moral theology (and Thomas's, in the *Scriptum*) is found in the second and third books of the *Sentences*: for example, in the second book

the Lombard treats the nature of virtue (*Sent*. II, d.27) and human sin (*Sent*. II, d.30–36), while in the third book he treats faith, hope, and charity (*Sent*. III, dd.25–27) as well as the connection of the virtues (*Sent*. III, d.36) and the law (*Sent*. III, d. 40). The upshot is that in the *Summa* Thomas radically expanded and systematized the moral theology initially dispersed throughout the *Sentences* and *Scriptum*.

The third part of the *Summa* examines Jesus Christ who, being both God and human, provides human beings a return to God as their end. The most basic division in the discussion of Christ is that between the nature of the incarnation itself (*ST* III, qq.1–26) and those things that were accomplished and suffered by Christ (*ST* III, qq.27–59). The third part of the *Summa* concludes with a discussion of the sacraments in general (*ST* III, qq. 60–65) and the sacraments in particular (*ST* III, qq.66–90). Thomas stopped writing the third part after completing question 90, midway through his analysis of penance; the remaining sections that Thomas proposed at the beginning of the *tertia pars* (e.g. (p. 533) treating the remaining sacraments, the last things, etc.)—known as the *supplementum*—were completed by his disciples using material from the *Scriptum* (many attribute the *supplementum* to Reginald of Piperno).

The Dominican theologian Marie-Dominique Chenu argued that the overarching structure of the *Summa* follows a broadly Neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* schema, such that the *prima pars* traces the dynamic movement of creatures from God (*exitus*), while the *secunda* and *tertia partes* trace the return of creatures to God (*reditus*) (Chenu 1940: 98). While there is merit to this proposal, two initial objections can be raised. First, within a strictly Neoplatonic framework the *exitus* of creatures from the first principle is a necessary emanation (e.g. *Enneads* 1.8.7), whereas for Thomas the *exitus* in question is a free act of creation by God and therefore not necessary. Second, as Rudi te Velde has argued, the twofold *exitus–reditus* schema has difficulties explaining the necessity of the *tertia pars* being dedicated explicitly to Jesus Christ (te Velde 2006: 15–17). Thus, while the *Summa* clearly narrates a ‘coming from God’ and a ‘returning to God’, it is perhaps best not to understand this as a necessarily Neoplatonic schema, but one that perhaps borrows on the scriptural language of God as the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and end (Torrell 2005b: 43).

Therefore the more significant structural divergences between the *Scriptum* and the *Summa* are best understood not in terms of a Neoplatonic influence but Thomas’s Aristotelianism. Thomas, like so many theologians of his generation, was profoundly influenced by the philosophical method of Aristotle. This is evident structurally, for example, in the first part of the *Summa* (i.e. his analysis of God). Peter Lombard’s discussion of God proceeded from an analysis of the divine Trinity in distinctions 3–33 to a discussion of divine unity in distinctions 34–48 (a structure influenced by Augustine’s *De doctrina Christiana*). Thomas rejected the Lombard’s ordering of theology and instead proceeded according to an adapted Aristotelian methodology. Aristotle argued that human knowledge progresses from that which is better known (e.g. through the senses) to that which is less known (e.g. by means of complex reasoning). Thomas applied this basic principle to the Christian understanding of God, beginning first with what is known more immediately by rea-

son (i.e. the divine unity) and progressing to what is known by means of revelation (i.e. the divine Trinity). Throughout the medieval period Thomas remains exceptional in reordering the doctrine of God by beginning with the divine unity and progressing to the divine Trinity. As will become evident it the subsequent discussion, Thomas's Aristotelianism became a significant point of contention in the reception of his thought.

While the theological contribution of Thomas's *Summa theologiae* cannot be reduced to a discussion of genre or structure, the historical significance of the *Summa* is highlighted by placing it in dialogue with the *Sentences* commentary tradition. The *Summa* represents a radical break with the *Sentences* commentary tradition (see Rosemann 2007) and it is possible that this is Thomas's greatest theological achievement. That said, his achievements in the *Summa* must be understood within a broader historical context. First and foremost, it is necessary to recall that throughout the late medieval period the masters tended to focus their attention on the *Scriptum* and not the *Summa*: in fact, the (p. 534) first commentary (more properly, summary) on the *Summa theologiae* was not written until the early fifteenth century by Henry of Gorkum (d. 1431) (Gorkum, *Quaestiones* 1473). Thus, while modern readers tend to focus almost exclusively on the *Summa* as the source of Thomas's theology, his medieval contemporaries and successors did not.

Thomas's Reception to 1500

When Thomas Aquinas died in 1274, he left an oeuvre that undeniably became the most eminent intellectual heritage of medieval scholasticism. Canonized as early as 1323, Thomas was officially declared teacher of the (Roman Catholic) Church in 1567, and the prominent state of his doctrine was reinforced in 1879 when Pope Leo XIII accorded doctrinal primacy to the teachings of Thomas. Up until the present, a considerable branch of 'Thomist' thinkers exists in contemporary theology and philosophy. In view of this vivid tradition of Thomists, it is no surprise that descriptions of the reception of Thomas's thought are usually done in terms of a history of Thomism. This is, however, a problematic approach. First of all, there is no agreement about what it means to be a Thomist and how the Thomistic movement should be defined. Is it the defence of a particular doctrine, of a specific set of doctrines, or the use of a particular method that constitutes a Thomist? From a historical perspective, this uncertainty is not surprising: even though within ten years after his death Thomas already had his first 'personal' defenders, an institutionalized Thomistic school only appeared in the fifteenth century. What is more, throughout the history of his reception, regional differences appear with respect to what students were interested in and thought to be essential when reading Aquinas; and even within a single geographical location, Thomas could have a different authority depending on whether he was read at a university or a Dominican school. Finally, Thomas not only influenced those who deliberately chose him as their intellectual model, but he was often appreciated, at least in certain regards, even by his most ardent opponents. Hence, a preliminary definition of what a Thomist is and a restriction of the study of Thomas's influence to those that fit this definition would fall short. Thus, in what follows we are less in-

terested in the history of a randomly defined Thomism, as in the history of the reception of Thomas Aquinas's thought.

From Condemnation to Canonization

Given the later importance of Thomas Aquinas, probably the most puzzling fact in the history of his reception is this history's very beginning: the first discernible movement related to Thomas's thought was not one of approval, but one of rebuke. Exposed to the usual scholastic debates during his lifetime, Thomas's doctrines came under heavy attack in the first years after his death. It seems to have been only then, as a reaction to these attacks, that advocates of Thomas Aquinas began to organize and started to defend (p. 535) his views (Bonino 2008: 27). Another puzzling fact in the history of Thomas's reception is, however, that his defenders seem to have succeeded very quickly since he was canonized only fifty years after his death. This section's heading, borrowed from Christopher Upham (2012: 515), describes the shift from 'condemnation to canonization' as the first stage in the history of his reception. Accordingly, this section aligns with Thomas's critics rather than with his followers.

During his lifetime, Thomas Aquinas did not found a school of thought and there is no reason to assume that he ever intended to do so. There are known scholastics who were his students, but none of them considered himself as curator of Thomas's intellectual heritage. In the years after his death it is much easier, though, to find opponents of Thomas Aquinas who attacked, in ways that exceeded usual scholastic debate, fundamental traits of his theological project. In a period marked by the rediscovery of Aristotle's entire philosophical corpus, and that was preoccupied with assessing the differences between this philosophy and traditional theological dogma, Thomas had tried to harmonize the two and to defend the unity of philosophical and theological rationality. Arguing as an Aristotelian philosopher, he asserted that he was able to defend Christian theology. Yet this synthetic approach was considered problematic from both the philosophical and theological sides. Philosophers such as Siger of Brabant (d. *c.*1282/4) or the German Dominican Dietrich of Freiberg (d. *c.*1310) at the turn of the fourteenth century accused Thomas's project of being a corruption of philosophy since it subordinated philosophical inquiry to the requirements of Christian theology (König-Pralong 2008).

More significant, however, were the critics among the theologians. This theological opposition is generally seen as the defensive reaction of scholastics trained in an Augustinian tradition—a tradition that emphasizes God's sovereignty, will, and freedom, and that declines any curtailing of God's possible acts on philosophical grounds. These Augustinians did not principally reject Aristotelian philosophy (as often has been supposed, see Bianchi 2009), but from their perspective (which, at the time was the majority), Thomas's synthetic approach (which is now often seen as the apogee of medieval scholasticism) betrayed the dignity of theology and of its first subject, God. These theological opponents of Thomas made themselves heard both in academic debate and by jurisdictional means.

Only three years after Thomas's death, several views he had defended were censured in what would become one of the most famous doctrinal condemnations in the history of medieval scholasticism. Responding to the ongoing discussion about the state and authority of Aristotelian philosophy, in March 1277 the Parisian bishop Étienne Tempier (d. 1279) promulgated a set of 219 propositions that were taught at the faculty of arts and that he forbade by threat of excommunication. These propositions covered a wide range of theological, philosophical, and scientific topics; not the least of them were condemned since they were seen to improperly constrain God's omnipotence (for a partial English translation of the condemnation see Grant, 1974: 45–50). Tempier did not explicitly name nor individually condemn the authors of these propositions, but it is apparent that Thomas Aquinas was among the targeted scholars. At least twenty of (p. 536) the condemned propositions can be found in Thomas (Gilson 1955: 728). Even though the condemnation addressed teachers of the arts faculty (Thomas had taught primarily in the faculty of theology), the members of the commission who prepared the condemnation—among them Henry of Ghent (d. 1293)—demonstrably knew Thomas's writings well enough to be aware of its repercussions on Thomas's doctrine (Wippel 1995). The immediate reception of the condemnation, at least, was unambiguous about the relevance for Thomas: theologians who continued to attack him started to list those propositions related to his doctrine. But in 1325, shortly after Thomas's canonization, the condemnation was revoked inasmuch as it concerned him (Emery/Speer 2001).

Still in March 1277, a very similar but most likely independent prohibition of philosophical propositions took place at Oxford. The leading figure of this condemnation was a confrère of Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Kilwardby (d. 1279), and once more contemporaries considered parts of this condemnation to be directed against Thomas Aquinas (Wilshire 1974: 130). This anti-Thomist bias became even more apparent when Kilwardby's successor John Peckham, a Franciscan, repeated the prohibition in 1284 and separately condemned in 1286 those propositions that concerned Thomas's doctrine. As a consequence, one of the first explicit defenders of Thomas at Oxford, Dominican Richard Knapwell (fl. *c.*1280s), was condemned by Peckham for his Thomist views and excommunicated in 1288 (Lowe 2003: 60).

But censures were not the only negative theological reaction to Thomas and his doctrine in the early days. In 1277 at Oxford, the Franciscan William de la Mare (d. *c.*1285) collected 118 problematic propositions he found in Thomas's *Summa theologiae*, his *Disputed questions*, and his *Scriptum*, and published them as the *Correctorium fratris Thomae*, a corrective to Thomas Aquinas (Hoenen 2001: 417; Bianchi 2009: 241). This *Correctorium* experienced rapid success both in Oxford and Paris, and it initiated at least three trends that would be decisive for the later reception of Thomas's thought. First, as a reaction to William's *Correctorium* the first positive reception of Thomas's doctrine became discernible, since in the following decade at least five refutations of William's tract—now called a *Corruptorium*, a corruption of Thomas—were written by Dominicans in Paris and Oxford. Hence, with this *Correctorium* controversy, the debate changed from a controversy about propositions to a controversy about a person. Second, since William's tract was compiled in direct response to certain works of Thomas, and since the Dominicans pur-

sued this approach, William unintentionally introduced into the history of Thomas's reception the genre of 'auxiliary literature'—that is, literature written from a meta-perspective and intended to facilitate access to the work of Thomas Aquinas. Without this genre of auxiliary literature that was soon to be complemented by concordances, abbreviations, and tables to the work of Aquinas, his thought could have never led to a doctrinal school or developed the impact it did (Goris 2002: 2). Confirming the auxiliary character of William's tract, the Franciscan's general chapter even decreed in 1282 that the friars were only allowed to read Thomas's *Summa* when accompanied by the *Correctorium*. Hence, third, from a quarrel between scholastics (remember that Kilwardby was a Dominican!), the controversy evolved into a conflict between religious orders.

(p. 537) The Dominicans made their own contribution to this institutionalization of a scholastic quarrel. In 1278 their general chapter sent two friars to England in order to investigate what 'scandals' may have been caused by friars retracting from Thomas's writings; a year later, the general chapter of Paris admonished the brothers not to tolerate friars who spoke irreverently of Thomas and his writings. Further, the general chapter of Strasbourg (1286) encouraged friars to promote Thomas's doctrine at least as a defendable position (Lowe 2003: 53f.). However, these decrees do not permit one to conclude—as has often been done—that 'Thomism' was now the official doctrine of the late thirteenth-century Dominican Order and thus represents the first Thomist school (Robiglio 2008). Beyond the very general references to Thomas and 'his writings', the general chapters never specified what it meant in practice to defend his doctrine, and in fact, in the first years of the fourteenth century Dominicans such as Dietrich of Freiberg or Meister Eckhart continued to criticize Thomas without being prosecuted. On the contrary, in 1311 Eckhart was given the privilege of holding the Dominican chair at the University of Paris for a second term (Hoenen 2010).

Things were different for the French Dominican Durandus of St Pourçain (d. 1334). Just as Eckhart or Dietrich, Durandus deviated from Thomas's doctrine during the first decade of the fourteenth century in a *Sentences* commentary he delivered at a provincial Dominican *studium*, and just as Eckhart, he was not prosecuted for this. In fact, he was honoured with the order's permission to complete his studies at the University of Paris. When he arrived in Paris in 1307, however, his mentor was Hervaeus Natalis (d. 1323), an influential Dominican who would become provincial of France and who, in his attempt to reform and unify the order's educational system, promoted Thomas Aquinas as the order's 'common doctor'. Hence, from the very beginning of Durandus's sojourn in Paris, the two were in conflict and in all likelihood it is out of this context that the general chapter of 1309 in Saragossa, where Hervaeus was present, tightened the decree of 1286, imposing on lecturers the injunction to teach according to the doctrine and works of Thomas Aquinas (Lowe 2003: 76).

Durandus read the signs of the times. Even if the rules of the order were not those of the university, he reworked for his academic lectures the first edition of his *Sentences* commentary into a far more modest redaction (as regards Aquinas) in which he simply passed over the most disputed topics (Schabel et al. 2001). In 1312, he was promoted to

the doctorate by the University of Paris. But in the meantime, copies of the first version of his commentary had begun to circulate, a fact that not only provoked the pro-Thomist faction of the order because of the commentary's content, but that was also seen as an infringement of the order's rules that required a preliminary authorization of works to be published. Hence, in 1313, the general chapter of Metz repeated both the proscription to publish unauthorized works and the obligation to stand by the common doctrine of Thomas. Further, the chapter decreed that no student was to be sent to Paris without having studied Thomas's doctrine for at least three years (Lowe 2003: 77). What is more, the chapter decided to start an investigation of Durandus's works. Yet, this investigation was, once more, a matter of the order's internal discipline. So, even though a commission presided over by Hervaeus collected ninety-three problematic (p. 538) propositions of which ninety-one were condemned within a year, Durandus's fame was not compromised. He was even appointed to teach at the papal court in Avignon and was free to defend his views both in an internal response to the order's authorities and on an academic level.

On the academic level, Durandus's contributions provoked ardent polemics in which more and more non-Dominicans got involved and extended the controversy beyond Dominican control. Inside the Dominican Order, however, the control was reinforced. Thomas's importance for the order's educational system was intensified to the point that, in this second decade of the fourteenth century, several members of the order were prosecuted throughout Europe for their disaffirmation of Thomas's 'common doctrine' (Lowe 2003: 80). Durandus was no longer affected by this examination: regardless of these internal Dominican affairs, Pope John XXII withdrew him from the order's jurisdiction and appointed him bishop of Limoux in 1317 where he was free to publish another version of his *Sentences* commentary—unsurprisingly a very critical one with regards to Thomas Aquinas.

Within the order, however, this one scholastic doctor of theology now had a status that was only comparable to the authority of one of the late ancient Fathers of the Church. Hence, even though the motifs may have been much more complicated, it was only consequent that in 1317 the Dominican province of Sicily instigated the process of canonization for Thomas. When, six years later, Pope John XXII declared the formerly controversial scholastic to be a saint, Thomas was not only the first, but for years to come remained the only scholastic to be canonized.

The Establishment of an Authority

With Thomas's canonization, the intra-Dominican debate about his status came to an end. But this did not mean that his authority was firmly established. To be sure, the consequent revocation—as far as Thomas' doctrine was concerned—of Tempier's condemnation in 1325 and a final tract against Durandus, the *Evidentia contra Durandum* by a certain Durandellus from about the same time, removed for the Dominicans the last doubts about Thomas's rationality and orthodoxy. But with these points settled, the general interest in Thomas Aquinas abated. The theological approaches of the Franciscans John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) and William of Ockham (d. 1347) now made it possible to reconcile Aristotelian

philosophy with the concept of divine free will and omnipotence, and hence the scholastic community turned away from the topics that were so heavily in dispute during the first decades after Thomas's death (Courtenay 1987: 181f.). Even Dominican theologians such as Robert Holcot (d. 1349), despite their general chapters' prescriptions, did not simply iterate what Thomas had said, but developed autonomous theological approaches based on the developments of Franciscan theology (Gelber 2004).

There were only a few exceptions. In 1363, Henry de Cervo (fl. 1350–60s) presented a *Sentences* commentary at Cologne in which he defended selected positions of Thomas, (p. 539) such as the possibility of an eternally created world or the instrumental causality of the sacraments (Grabmann 1956). What is more, Thomas's moral philosophy—i.e. that part of his doctrine that was relevant for the great majority of Dominican friars who never studied at a university—was continuously held in high esteem at the Dominican *studia* and in northern Italy in particular, led to several ethical writings such as the *Liber de virtutibus* of Guido Vernani da Rimini (d. *c.*1345) that deliberately elaborated on Thomas's positions (Cova 2011). In general, however, Dominicans remembered their order's doctrinal master with reverence, but without resorting to a particular defence of him.

Yet, in this unspectacular, low-grade, but constant remembrance, Thomas's fame rose. Because of the Dominicans' presence at the universities, Thomas never completely disappeared from the discussions, but remained an inevitable factor—if only to be disapproved in a few words. For example, Thomas of Strasbourg (d. 1357)—an Augustinian Hermit working at Paris around 1335—adopted the Dominican terminology and referred to Thomas as 'the common doctor', but he nevertheless rejected him in many cases. By and by, however, this 'negative' importance of Thomas turned into a general respect far beyond his order's boundaries. Marsilius of Inghen (d. 1396), a secular working at Paris around 1365, would refer to Thomas's thought as a secure and very probable position, dissimulating the differences with his own doctrine (Santos-Noya 2000: 202). A few years later, the secular Henry of Oyta (d. 1397) compiled a *Sentences* commentary at Prague that modelled in structure and content Thomas's *Scriptum* (Zahnd 2014: 266–274). In the context of the Black Death and the papal schism, scholastics of the later fourteenth century favoured well-established theological approaches; hence Thomas—who remained present for so many years, was known as the 'common doctor', and was canonized—gained a generally recognized authority.

But the extent of this authority had yet to be defined. In 1387, the Dominican John of Montesono (fl.1385–90) criticized in public speeches the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and was therefore accused of heresy by the University of Paris. But the Dominicans supported Montesono since the view he defended accorded with Thomas's doctrine; and since they considered Thomas's canonization and the partial revocation of the 1277 articles as his doctrinal endorsement by the Church, they appealed to the pope. Pierre d'Ailly (d. 1420), then chancellor of the university, responded on its behalf with an extensive tract that included a long passage on the authority of Thomas. D'Ailly did not question Thomas's authority as such and he relied heavily on Aquinas in his refutation of Montesono: but at the same time he dismissed the idea that Thomas's authority extended into

every aspect of theology. Just as any other saint, Pierre d'Ailly argued, Thomas was not infallible, and hence he was sometimes in need of reinterpretation (Hoenen 2009: 75–78; 2010: 269f.). The pope adopted d'Ailly's argumentation and as a result, not only was Montesono excommunicated, but the Dominicans were de facto excluded from the University of Paris. Yet this failure of an uncritical Thomism was, at the same time, the conclusive assessment of Thomas's authority, since d'Ailly's serious, but not all-embracing acceptance of Thomas was widely received. Thus at the turn of the fifteenth century, it is easy to find throughout European universities an acceptance of (p. 540) Thomas by non-Dominicans such as Giles Charlier (d. 1472) in Paris, Henry of Gorkum in Paris and Cologne, and Nicolas of Dinkelsbühl (d. 1433) in Vienna (Zahnd 2014).

Thomas and the Schools of the Fifteenth Century

The fifteenth century began with yet another fundamental challenge to Thomas's doctrine. At the Council of Constance (1414–18), John Hus (d. 1415) and Jerome of Prague (d. 1416) were executed for a heretical understanding of the Eucharist, an understanding that was explicitly linked with their philosophy of universals. Suspected of supporting an extreme realism that considered universals as autonomous entities, they were said to not be able to explain the disappearance of the bread's substance in transubstantiation, and hence to promote consubstantiation. Even though this debate did not explicitly engage Thomas, it incriminated his orthodoxy because Thomas defended a realist position on universals, even if in a far more modest form (Goris 2002: 6).

Hence, for many scholastics who were trained in the cautious and traditionalist perspective of the late fourteenth century, Constance was the ultimate confirmation that a commingling of philosophical and theological problems was dangerous and unsuitable for teaching young students. These scholars rejected the holistic but metaphysically overloaded approaches of ancient scholastics, among whom they counted Thomas Aquinas, and while still accepting Thomas as an authority in theological matters, they relied in their philosophical teachings on more modern and, one could say, purely philosophical approaches that were developed in the later fourteenth century. In opposition to this *via moderna*—this modern way of teaching philosophy—others were scandalized by the idea that the doctrine of generally approved and well-established scholastics could possibly lead to heresy. For them, the orthodoxy of Thomas was confirmed by his canonization and hence they began to revive the old way (i.e. the *via antiqua*) of teaching philosophy with a holistic, theological perspective. These two *viae* quickly evolved into different schools of thought so that, throughout the fifteenth century and particularly in German lands, universities split into the so-called *Wegestreit* with the *moderni* (or Nominalists as they were called according to their position on universals), and, on the other side, the *antiqui* or Realists who coalesced around the models of Albert the Great, John Duns Scotus, and Thomas Aquinas (Hoenen 2009: 67–70).

One of the strongholds of the Thomistic *via antiqua* was Cologne (Goris 2002). Together with (and soon in concurrence with) Albert the Great, Thomas was promoted as the best way of interpreting Aristotle. Many commentaries *secundum viam Thomae* (according to

the way of Thomas) or *ad mentem Thomae* (in the sense of Thomas) were published. Apparently, this ‘old’ approach was received enthusiastically since the number of students enrolling in the *via antiqua* at Cologne exploded, while the *via moderna* was marginalized. It is important to note that the representatives of Thomism at Cologne were not Dominicans, but mostly seculars such as the aforementioned Henry of Gorkum, his student Gerard de Monte (d. 1480), and John Tinctoris (d. 1469). They were organized in so-called *Bursae*, in study houses where masters and students of all (p. 541) faculties lived together and cultivated the memory of their intellectual model. Hence, the philosophical Thomism started to affect theology too, and for the purposes of study, not only these *Bursae* elaborated on the Thomist auxiliary literature, but they were also among the first to provide rudimentary commentaries on Thomas’s *Summa theologiae*. Students trained in these *Bursae* exported to other German universities (such as Vienna, Leipzig, Rostock, and Freiburg) both the focus on Thomas and the habit of commenting on the *Summa*, such that Thomism gained, for the first time in history, the status of an independent intellectual school.

At Paris, where the Dominicans retrieved their old rights in 1403, the aftertaste of their exclusion, along with the reports from Constance, provoked a very personal defence of Aquinas. The Dominican John Capreolus (d. 1444), reading the *Sentences* at Paris in 1409, expanded his lectures in the 1420s into a huge apology of Thomas—the so-called *Defensiones divi Thomae Aquinatis*—in which he challenged the ‘negative’ reception of Thomas in fourteenth-century theology. Collecting arguments that were brought against Aquinas by some twenty different scholastics of the preceding century, Capreolus refuted them one by one, explaining disputed passages by means of other passages of Thomas that he collected from the whole range of Thomas’s works (Rosemann 2007: 139–148). A monumental synthesis of Thomist theology was the result, and Capreolus—who was soon honoured as the *princeps thomistarum*—defined for almost a century the scope of other theological defences of Thomas. And because Capreolus cited Thomas’s adversaries in detail, it was no longer necessary to consult their original works. However, Capreolus’s success in France was rather limited. To be sure, according to the registers of the university library, Thomas was the most consulted author at Paris, but there are no traces after Capreolus of an explicit promotion of Thomas. Even in the arts faculty—where the secular John Versor (d. *c.*1485) fostered the *via antiqua* with such great a success in the middle of the century that his works were used in Leuven, Basel, and in the classrooms of the Cologne Thomists—they were not focused exclusively on Thomas (i.e. it would be improper to label Versor a Thomist) (Rutten 2005).

Capreolus experienced greater success in northern Italy. Unlike other European universities, Italian universities did not have theological faculties; instead, teaching theology was the responsibility of the religious orders which were allowed to lecture occasionally at one of the universities. In the polemical milieu of fifteenth-century schools of thought, the Dominicans did not miss out on these occasions to promote Thomas Aquinas, and thanks to their apologetic structure, Capreolus’s *Defensiones* were a useful tool not only to defend Thomas, but also to refute the intellectual patrons of other religious orders. Paul Soncinas (d. 1494) and Sylvester Prierias (d. 1527) both presented abbreviations of

Capreolus's work, and as a young theologian Cajetan—before compiling his famous commentary on the *Summa* that will be discussed later in this chapter—presented a commentary on the Lombard's *Sentences* that borrowed heavily from the *Defensiones*. But Italian Dominicans also developed their own Thomist tradition. As early as the Cologne masters, they began to comment on the *Summa theologiae* (at Padua, Ludovicus Longo, d. 1475); concurring with the other schools of thought they explained Aristotle according to Thomas Aquinas (at Bologna, Dominic of Flanders, (p. 542) d. 1479) and pursued, with Petrus de Bergamo (d. 1482) and his *Tabula aurea*, the genre of auxiliary literature. From northern Italy Thomism spread into eastern Europe (Peter Nigri, d. *c.*1484, at Buda) and finally back to Paris (Bonino 2007).

By the end of the fifteenth century, Thomas's doctrinal heritage had its advocates in the main intellectual centres of Europe—although, this is not to say that Thomas was received exclusively by Thomists. Throughout the different schools, Thomas was a respected authority (see van Geest 2007), however the polemical context of the opposing *viae* produced a specific school of thought which—without being necessarily linked to the Dominican Order—had a particular focus on Aquinas. At Cologne, one of the birthplaces of this type of Thomism, the polemical situation deteriorated when the *via antiqua* split up into the followers of Thomas and the followers of Albert the Great. They separated once more on the question of knowing whether Aristotle contradicts the faith, and the Thomists, once again stressing their belief in the compatibility of philosophical and theological rationality, promoted Thomas as the way of commenting on Aristotle that did not lead to controversial results (Hoenen 2012). When, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, efforts were taken to overcome the school controversies—and when the Reformation begun to threaten doctrinal unity anew—this non-controversial, widely used approach of the 'common doctor' suggested itself as the most consensual position. The time was ripe for the triumphant success of Thomas in the Early Modern period.

Reform and the Baroque Period: 1500–1650

In the Early Modern period Thomas received a discernible reception only in particular milieux, those of school theology and school philosophy. But in the aftermath of the Renaissance and the Reformation, new philosophical and theological currents emerged that developed independently from institutional boundaries and did not care about traditional authorities such as Thomas Aquinas.

Inside the institutional milieu of Early Modern scholasticism, on the other hand, Thomas's influence was stronger than ever before: building on his fame as the common doctor, Catholics relied preferentially on Thomas in their controversies with the Protestants, and hence Thomas became one of the first—and more and more appreciated—points of reference for Protestants when they referred to Catholic doctrine. Hence, Thomas was omnipresent in theological debates and when the Council of Trent (1545–1563) decided to unify the education of the clergy, Thomas's works not only became the manuals for a majority of the new seminaries, but also an impressive number of old and new religious or-

ders committed themselves to the promotion of Thomas's doctrine. Besides the Dominicans, this was true for Carmelites, Benedictines, Premonstratensians, Augustinian Hermits, Trinitarians, and the Jesuits in particular. (p. 543) By the end of the sixteenth century, in most Catholic universities the text of Thomas's *Summa theologiae* had replaced Peter Lombard's *Sentences* as the standard textbook for the teaching of theology (Schmutz 2008).

But just as the use of the *Sentences* by medieval authors does not allow one to label them as a distinct group of 'Lombardians', this Early Modern use of Thomas Aquinas did not result in a coherent doctrine of Thomism (even if there were tendencies to establish a unified reading). On the contrary, these manifold references to Thomas and his theology provoked controversies about his true teaching. Self-proclaimed Thomists were accused of anti-Thomism by others who, themselves, were labelled a-Thomists, and scholastics committed to other intellectual traditions such as Scotism—who were now compelled to base their teachings on Thomas's work as well—complicated the picture with deliberate readings against the grain (Schmutz 2008). In this complex and sometimes confusing situation, the present discussion will limit itself to two aspects: (1) the use of Thomas during the period of the Protestant Reformation (by both Catholics and Protestants)l and (2) the related but somewhat geographically isolated reception on the Iberian peninsula by Spanish and Portuguese theologians (the 'Salamanca School').

The Era of Reform

Thomas Aquinas had a significant influence on sixteenth-century theology among both Catholic and Protestant theologians. While the influence of Thomas in the first half of the sixteenth century is often limited to a discussion of the Catholic reception of his thought, it is important to begin by noting that the first generation of Protestant reformers included several theologians who were cradle Catholics and brought to their studies a profound knowledge of Thomas's theology. Thus, we begin with a few notes on early Protestants sympathetic to Thomas.

While the reception of Thomas among the first generation of Protestant theologians is perhaps minimal, a full account of Thomas's influence would include a discussion of theologians such as Martin Bucer (d. 1551), Peter Martyr Vermigli (d. 1562), and even Martin Luther (d. 1546). As a young Dominican, Bucer studied Thomas's theology in great detail (Leijssen 1978). He was educated in theology at Heidelberg and his entire theological corpus demonstrates his familiarity with the works of Thomas. And, as Martin Greschat has demonstrated, Bucer personally owned virtually all of Thomas's important theological writings (Greschat 2009). While perhaps not as familiar with Thomas as Bucer, the Italian reformer and former member of the Canons Regular of St Augustine, Peter Martyr Vermigli, was also influenced by Thomas. Finally, Janz's study of Martin Luther's engagement with Thomas and his late medieval followers demonstrates the complexity of tracing Thomas's influence among those both sympathetic and critical of his work (Janz 1983).

The influence of Thomas among Catholic theologians in the sixteenth century is easier to trace. In the Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation, Thomas's theology would be central to many decrees and canons of the Council of Trent (1545–63). For (p. 544) example, the decree concerning original sin from the fifth session (June 1546), the decree and canons on the doctrine of justification from the sixth session (January 1547), and the canons on baptism from the seventh session (March 1547) all explicitly rely on Thomas's mature theology. And, while it is perhaps not accurate to consider these decrees and canons 'Thomist' in any strict sense (however one is to interpret that term), the theology of Thomas had a significant influence on the broader theology of the council fathers. This is true, despite the fact that many theologians attending the Council of Trent were not Dominicans or Thomistic per se. If the doctrine of justification serves as a test case, one notes that while Thomas's theology had a significant influence on the shape of the doctrine—and that Thomas was 'cited more than any other theologian … other than Augustine' (McGrath 2005: 319–320)—the theologians attending the sixth session were predominantly Franciscan (of the fifty-five theologians attending, twenty-nine were Franciscans and only seven were Dominicans). Thus, while the Dominicans remained a minority at the sixth session of the council, the theology of Thomas was informative for the canons and decrees. Trent closed in December of 1563 and four years later in 1567, Pope Pius V (OP, d. 1572) declared Aquinas to be 'Doctor of the Church' in *Mirabilis Deus*, and by the end of the decade the first '*opera omnia*' of Thomas's works appeared. This edition, often referred to as the *Editio piana*, was commissioned by Pius V and fostered the continued study of Thomas's thought.

Finally, belonging to the era of reform is Thomas de Vio Cajetan's (d. 1534) massive commentary on the *Summa theologiae*. Cajetan was an Italian Dominican who was sent by Pope Leo X to the Diet of Augsburg in 1518 to investigate the writings of Martin Luther. While Cajetan would eventually assist in writing the papal Bull excommunicating Luther (*Exsurge Domine*), he clearly had a significant amount of respect for the reformer from Wittenberg. Cajetan began his commentary on the *Summa* while teaching in Rome a decade before his confrontation with Luther, and it is interesting that after his engagement with Luther, Cajetan devoted the majority of his time to commentaries on Scripture. That said, he did complete his edition of the commentary on the *Summa*, publishing his remarks on the *tertia pars* in 1522. This work has often been accepted as the standard commentary on the *Summa* and was printed alongside it in the Leonine edition.

The Iberian Peninsula

The influence of Thomas Aquinas on the Iberian Peninsula must fittingly go through Paris, and despite the vitriol of Desiderius Erasmus (d. 1536) against his former college (the Collège de Montaigu), at the turn to the sixteenth century the University of Paris was an active and vibrant place to study theology. In the early sixteenth century the most famous theologian at Paris was John Mair (d. 1550), who as a logician was an ardent opponent of the Thomist *via antiqua*, but as a theologian nevertheless held Thomas in high esteem. One of Mair's students, Peter Crockaert (d. 1514), joined the Dominican Order in 1503 and introduced his students to the study of theology through the *Summa theologiae* (on

Crockaert, see Farge 1980: 126–127). This is where the young Spanish Dominican (p. 545) Francisco de Vitoria (d. 1546) became acquainted with the theology of Thomas Aquinas. He studied with Crockaert and Jean de Fenario (also a promoter of Thomas) at Paris and was entrusted by Crockaert with editing the *Secunda secundae* of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* (Farge 1980: 425). When Vitoria returned to Spain in 1523 he initially taught at a Dominican *studium*; three years later, in 1526, he was elected to the chair of theology at the University of Salamanca. The influence of Vitoria in Spain was immense and he counts among his students Domingo de Soto (d. 1560), Melchor Cano (d. 1560), Alfonso de la Vera-Cruz (d. 1584), Diego de Zúñiga (d. 1531), Andrés de Vega (d. 1549), and Bartolomé de Medina (d. 1581).

While Vitoria did not publish many works in his lifetime, his lectures at Salamanca were incredibly popular. In his lectures Vitoria developed theories of international law, natural rights, and national sovereignty; through the publication of his lectures as students' lecture notes (beginning in 1528 with the publication of *De potestate civilii*), he had a significant influence on the development of political theories at a time when European powers were beginning to colonize the Americas. Thus, through Vitoria and other theologians of the Salamanca school, Thomas's thought was expanded into theories of international law and politics.

The reception of Thomas's thought in the second half of the sixteenth century was profound. It is not possible here to present either an exhaustive treatment of the diversity of interpretations of Thomas among various groups, nor even a complete catalogue of the numerous factions; here, we discuss briefly a dispute that took place between Jesuit and Dominican interpreters of Thomas's theology. First, Ignatius of Loyola (d. 1556), the founder of the Society of Jesus, was among those who singled out Thomas Aquinas as the theologian for guiding his order's theological formation (in this case in the *Jesuit Constitutions* adopted in 1554). In the generations that followed, Jesuit theologians such as Luis de Molina (d. 1600), Gabriel Vasquez (d. 1604), and Francisco Suárez (d. 1617) produced a profound literature analysing the theological and philosophical works of Thomas Aquinas. Alongside the developing Spanish Jesuit tradition, the Dominican Order also included several outstanding theologians, including Vitoria's student Bartolomé de Medina, and Domingo Báñez (d. 1604). In the late sixteenth century a debate regarding the efficacy of grace emerged between the two orders and their respective interpretations of Thomas Aquinas.

Later referred to as the Molinist debate, the central concern was the relationship between God's efficacious grace and human free will. In response to the traditional Augustinian or Thomistic position which held that God's grace affects the soul's free assent to God's offer of salvation, Molina argued for a 'middle knowledge' (*scientia media*) such that God foresees individual human choices (unactualized future contingent acts) and predestines those who will consent to His grace. Báñez responded by arguing that according to Thomas, God's eternal act of predestination is made independent of all merit (even foreseen merit) (for more, see O'Meara 1997: 160–167). This debate over how to interpret Thomas Aquinas lingered on into the early seventeenth century and is representa-

tive of the type of theologizing that dominated the interpretation of Thomas Aquinas throughout the baroque period.

(p. 546) Finally, it is fitting to conclude the discussion of Thomas's reception on the Iberian peninsula with mention of the Dominican theologian John of St Thomas (d. 1644). John of St Thomas was born in Lisbon and educated at Leuven before taking the chair in theology at Alcalá. He is perhaps best known for his two massive works, the *Cursus philosophicus* and the *Cursus theologicus*; the former was printed in nine folio volumes between 1632 and 1636, the latter in seven folio volumes between 1637 and 1644. For many, this massive compilation stands out as a high point in the development of Thomistic thought in the mid-seventeenth century.

Thomas's Reception from 1650 to 1879

With scholasticism in general, Thomas Aquinas's thought ceased to have a significant influence on the history of philosophy and theology between 1650 and about 1850. First, it is important to observe the various historical factors that come into play, not least of which are political, economic, and cultural. Specifically, this period sees the decline in Spanish power and the rise of French hegemony that would last until the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. Thus, while Thomas's thought would experience a resurgence on the Iberian peninsula in the early seventeenth century, this movement would not last. Second, in the philosophical world, the rationalism of thinkers such as René Descartes (d. 1650) and Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (d. 1716) both borrowed from scholasticism and sought to transcend it. In this regard, Upham is correct to observe that the arguments for the existence of God or a necessary being found in both Descartes and Leibniz are radically distinct from Aquinas's arguments for the existence of God in the *quinque viae* (Upham 2012: 523–524). Further, as one continues to trace the history of modern philosophy beyond the rationalists into the empiricists (e.g. John Locke (d. 1704), George Berkley (d. 1753), and David Hume (d. 1776)), there is even less influence of medieval scholasticism. Many Catholic thinkers were open to these new approaches and they received these approaches in explicit dissociation from traditional schools of thought and from the Jesuits and Thomism in particular. Hence, in the new positive theology and its historical approach, the thought of Thomas Aquinas only served as a negative backdrop (see, e.g. Burson 2010: 79–91). Even if this is to simplify matters considerably, the conclusion is that there was very little discussion of Thomas's thought outside the seminary context between 1650 and 1850. And, while it is not accurate to conclude from this that Thomas's thought was not studied during this period, it is accurate to state that the reception of his thought during this period was not engaged with economic, political, or intellectual developments outside the Catholic seminary context.

Despite this general trend of decline, Thomas's thought experienced a resurgence in the second half of the nineteenth century. The resurgence of his thought within Catholic theology in the middle of the nineteenth century is a complex development that ultimately has its roots in numerous factors, including the universal restoration of the Jesuits (see

Inglis 1998). Formerly suppressed in Spain, Portugal, France, and other territories, (p. 547) Pope Pius VII restored the Jesuits in 1814 and the resurgence of the order is significant in tracing the reception of Thomas's thought. Another factor that contributed to the rediscovery of medieval philosophy (and by extension Thomas) in the early nineteenth century is the influence of Romanticism and the interest in nature, natural religion, and mysticism. The Romantic movement inspired German scholars such as Christoph Bernhard Schlüter (d. 1884) to take medieval thought seriously (Inglis 1998: 48) and reinvigorated it as a subject of concentrated analysis. Interestingly, Schlüter—and other professors (e.g. Johann Theodor Katerkamp, d. 1834) interested in early and medieval Christian thought—had a significant influence on the young German student Joseph Kleutgen (d. 1883) at the theological academy of Münster. Kleutgen, who would join the Society of Jesus in 1832, deserves special mention in the revival of Thomas's thought leading up to the first Vatican Council (1869–70). What is striking about Kleutgen's turn to Thomas is that it was focused on the Angelic Doctor's virtues as a philosopher (to counter Enlightenment philosophy) and not his theological contribution.

Joseph Kleutgen's five-volume *Theologie der Vorzeit* (*Theology of the Past*) was published between 1853 and 1870 and argued that modern theologies were not as well equipped to defend and nourish the faith as pre-modern theologies. In particular, Kleutgen argued that 'Aquinas is the greatest of the Scholastics because he offers a correct account of the relation between reason and revelation' (Inglis 1998: 73). Throughout his writings Kleutgen directs much of his energy to demonstrating the problems with Immanuel Kant's philosophy and argues that the problems with modern thought are best addressed in the thought of the Angelic Doctor. His view of medieval philosophy and theology would have a lasting impact on the subsequent revival of Thomas's thought and inspired Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Aeterni Patris* issued in 1879. In fact, it is highly probable that Kleutgen was the principal author of *Aeterni Patris*.

Thomas's reception between 1650 and 1879 ends on the verge of a Thomistic renaissance and the rise of neo-Thomism—however, despite the language of 'rebirth' and 'rise' implicit in such statements, there are real questions about the vitality of this intellectual tradition in the modern period. Thomas's thought developed in the thirteenth century as a form of Christian scholasticism that was implicitly wedded to an Aristotelian philosophy. And, while these three dimensions (Thomas' scholastic method, Christian commitments, and Aristotelian philosophy) of Thomas's thought were normative throughout the late Middle Ages and up through the Early Modern period (at least until the end of the seventeenth century), increasingly the scholastic method itself as well as Thomas's Christian and Aristotelian commitments became inhibitors of his reception. Thus, between 1650 and 1879 the influence of Thomas's thought would slowly decline, and while there would be a resurgence after *Aeterni Patris*, his thought would remain isolated within Catholic institutions.

Suggested Reading

The best general introduction to Thomas's life and works is Torrell's *Saint Thomas Aquinas* and the reader is directed to Torrell's catalogue of Thomas's works for extensive bibliographical (p. 548) information (2005a: 330–361). For further information on the life and works of Thomas Aquinas, please consult: **William of Tocco (1996)**; Torrell (**2003**; **2005a**; **2005b**). The best short introduction to Thomas's reception in English (although relying on an alternative methodology) remains **Romanus Cessario's *A Short History of Thomism* (2005)**.

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Bonaventure and the Franciscan Tradition

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the thirteenth-century Franciscan and theologian St Bonaventure. After outlining his life, the chapter explores Bonaventure's theology through an exploration of his Breviloquium. Placing all in the context of Bonaventure's Trinitarianism, the heart of the chapter explores Bonaventure's conception of salvation history and the role of Christ at the centre of that history. A detailed account of Bonaventure's account of the graceful and sacramental elevation of humanity follows. Particular attention is paid to the interrelated roles of Christ and the Spirit in this process. The final section of the chapter comments briefly on Bonaventure's influence, referring especially to those figures who have found his work an important resource in the modern context.

Keywords: Bonaventure, Franciscan, Trinity, Christ, grace, Holy Spirit, sacraments, theology

Life and Career

BONAVENTURE was born Giovanni di Fidanza probably around AD 1217 or 1221 (see Cullen 2006: 8–9). He recounts in several places how, when he was a child, he became very ill. His mother prayed for the intercession of St Francis, after which Bonaventure experienced a miraculous recovery. Bonaventure's early education was likely with Franciscans in Bagnoregio, and when he was a teenager, he studied in the arts faculty at the University of Paris. In Paris, Bonaventure met his most influential teacher, Alexander of Hales (*c*. AD 1185-1245), a secular priest who entered the Franciscan order in 1236. Sometime between 1238 and 1243, Bonaventure himself entered the Franciscan Order in Paris. Between 1243 and 1253 or 1254 he studied theology, first with Alexander and John of La Rochelle, and later probably with other Franciscans such as William of Melitona and Odo of Rigaud. At the end of this period, Bonaventure received his licentiate, but his recognition as a master of theology was delayed by a dispute between the secular and mendicant masters until 1257, the same year he was elected minister general of the Franciscan Order.

As minister general of the order, Bonaventure had numerous tasks. His predecessor, John of Parma (1209-89), was suspected of heresy, allegedly adopting too uncritically the apocalypticism of Joachim of Fiore (*c.*1135-1202). Related to Joachimism was the increasing divergence between the Spirituals and the Conventuals within the order; the former wished to preserve the austerity of St Francis's rule, while the latter generally agreed to papal adaptations of the rule that permitted the use of property, if not the ownership of property. Bonaventure also had to defend the mendicant practice of poverty against secular theologians at the University of Paris, who had come to believe that the extreme devotion to poverty along with the eschatological speculations of figures such as Gerard of Borgo San Donnino (d. 1276/7) were dangerous for the life of the Church.

(p. 552) In 1273 Pope Gregory X made Bonaventure a cardinal and later that year ordained him bishop of Albano just before the opening of the Second Council of Lyons the following year. Bonaventure played a significant role at the council, helping effect a union between the Roman Church and the Greek Church, even if that union did not last long. Bonaventure died shortly after the union was effected, on 15 July 1274. He was canonized in 1432 and declared a doctor of the Church in 1588.

Theology

Theology, which Bonaventure also refers to as 'sacred doctrine', and simply 'Holy Scripture', is a science that 'imparts as much knowledge of the first Principle as is needed by us wayfarers for attaining salvation' (*Brev.* 1.1.2; De Vinck 1963: 33). The Trinity is the source of theology, and humanity perceives the triune God through faith in Christ (*Brev. Prol*. 2). Theology develops throughout the written Scriptures, describing the entire universe as an emanation from God in literal and figurative language (i.e. the four senses of Scripture; *Brev. Prol*. 3, 6). For Bonaventure, theology is 'sapiential'. That is, theology is partly speculative insofar as it leads to knowledge of God, but it is also practical insofar as its goal is to make people good and to lead them to union with God. Ultimately, theology leads to eternal blessedness in heaven (*Brev. Prol*. 4).

The subject of theology is God as First Principle, considered not only in Himself as efficient and exemplary cause, but also with respect to the redemption and perfection of the universe. This latter consideration is what distinguishes theology from philosophy, according to Bonaventure. Philosophy considers God as First Principle and as cause of all things, but theology also considers God as 'the remedy of sin, the reward of merit, and the goal of desire' (*Brev.* 1.1.3; De Vinck 1963: 34). The knowledge that the theologian acquires is not mere cognitive knowledge, but it permeates the whole being of the individual; therefore, 'All Christians should burn with the longing to attain this knowledge' (*Brev.* 1.1.3; De Vinck 1963: 34).

The literary structure of the *Breviloquium* reveals Bonaventure's preferred outline for how theological topics should be related. He says that seven principal topics constitute sacred doctrine: the Trinity, creation, sin, the Incarnation of the Word, the grace of the Holy Spirit, the sacramental remedy, and the last stage and final judgement (*Brev.* 1.1.1).

This outline appears similar to that of Peter Lombard's *Four Books of Sentences*, but instead of having things and signs as conditioning the overall structure of theology (three books for things and one book for signs), Bonaventure maintains a distinct division of the seven principal topics because theology is ultimately about God: as efficient and exemplary Cause ([1] Trinity and [2] creation); and as reflective and perfective Principle ([3] sin, [4] the Incarnation of the Word, [5] the grace of the Holy Spirit, [6] the sacramental remedy, and [7] the last stage and final judgement) see *Brev.* 1.1.2. Bonaventure goes so far as to assert that there is a cruciform pattern to the topics of theology. In the prologue of the *Breviloquium*, he says:

(p. 553)

> Scripture, then, deals with the whole universe, the high and the low, the first and the last, and all things in between. It is, in a sense, an intelligible cross in which the whole organism of the universe is described and made to be seen in the light of the mind. If we are to understand this cross, we must know God, the Principle of beings; we must know how these beings were created, how they fell, how they were redeemed through the blood of Jesus Christ, reformed through grace, and healed through the sacraments; and, finally, how they are to be rewarded with eternal pain or eternal glory
>
> (*Brev. Prol.* 4; De Vinck 1963: 21).

Thus, even though theology addresses numerous topics, it is one science that 'resolves everything in God as the first and supreme principle' (*Brev. Prol.* 6; De Vinck 1963: 22).

Bonaventure's theology of the Trinity combines various Augustinian, Dionysian, Anselmian, and Victorine elements. From Augustine he draws the analogies of the mind and love. For Augustine, minds generate concepts in such a way that allows for distinctions between the intellect, what is thought, and the act of thinking, just as whenever there is love, there is a lover, a beloved, and the act of loving. The Dionysian influence appears when Bonaventure distinguishes existence as the characteristic of God's unity from goodness that manifests God as self-diffusive and self-communicating (*Itin.* 6.2). Bonaventure also takes over Anselm's exercise of thinking of a greater being than can be thought; only, in a Trinitarian context, Bonaventure attempts to think of the greatest possible self-communication. If God could not communicate Himself perfectly and absolutely, one might doubt God's power, and if God could communicate Himself perfectly and absolutely, and did not will such a self-communication, one could doubt God's goodness. As Bonaventure says in *The Journey of the Mind to God*:

> Good is said to be self-diffusive; therefore, the highest good is that which diffuses itself the most. Now, diffusion cannot stand as the highest unless it is intrinsic and actual, substantial yet personal, essential yet voluntary, necessary yet free, perfect yet incessant. Thus, in the supreme good, there must be from all eternity an actual and consubstantial producing, the producing of a hypostasis as noble as the One who produces by way of both generation and spiration. So, there is produced an

> Eternal Principle, who is an eternal Co-producer. And thus, there is the producing of one Beloved and one Co-beloved, of one Engendered and one Spirated. Otherwise, this good would not be supremely self-diffusive
>
> (*Itin.* 6.2; De Vinck 1960: 49–50).

A total self-diffusion would have to be eternal and substantial, and the 'product' of the self-diffusion would be the same as the Producer. Bonaventure, following Augustine, often refers to the 'product' as God's Art, the creative self-expression of God, referred to in the New Testament as the Word. The Word receives his being from the Producer, that is the Father, and communicates that being to the One who receives only, the Spirit. Thus, the three Persons of the Trinity have their being in different ways: the Father communicates, the Son receives and communicates, and the Spirit receives. Although Augustine offers analogies both of the mind and of love, Bonaventure's appropriation of (p. 554) the analogy of love is reminiscent of Richard of St Victor insofar as three co-eternal and consubstantial Persons are required for there to be perfect charity and self-diffusion (see *Itin.* 6.2; *De Tripl. Via.* 3.11).

One aspect of Bonaventure's Trinitarian theology that is important for his doctrine of creation is his description and use of appropriations. Certain attributes of the divine essence can be predicated, often on account of scriptural passages or a personal property, of one of the three Persons of the Trinity. For example, because unity signifies wholeness and priority, it is appropriated to the Father. The perfect self-communication of that unity to another, implies that the recipient of that self-communication is a living, intelligible expression of the Father, and thus truth is appropriated to the Son. The Son, perfectly imaging the Father, also shares in the self-communication of the Father, and thus the recipient of the Father's and Son's self-communication is 'Love' and 'Gift' on account of the Holy Spirit being 'spirated' by the beneficent will of the Father and the Son (*Brev.* 1.3.9, 1.6.2). Because Bonaventure emphasizes the difference in how all three Persons possess the divine nature, he is able to articulate several series of appropriations, such as: oneness, truth, and goodness; efficiency, exemplarity, and finality; and omnipotence, omniscience, and benevolence.

Having been created from nothing by God, the efficient, exemplary, and final Cause of creation, the universe reflects God in several ways. Bonaventure accentuates creation's Trinitarian imprint:

> [T]he creature is an effect of the creating Trinity in virtue of a triple causality: efficient, through which creatures are given unity, mode, and measure; exemplary, through which they are given truth, species, and number; final, through which they are given goodness, order, and weight. These, as traces of the Creator, are present in all creatures, whether material or spiritual or composites of both.
>
> (*Brev.* 2.1.2; De Vinck 1963: 70)

While all creatures possess ‘traces’ of the Creator, only rational beings bear the image of God, and only ‘deiform’ creatures made holy by grace bear the likeness of God. Creatures are of three kinds: some creatures are spiritual, while others are material or composites of both. Purely spiritual beings reflect the Trinity in possessing three powers in one essence, namely memory, intellect, and will. These bodiless creatures are hierarchically arranged, following Dionysius, in three groups of three. Seraphim, cherubim, and thrones communicate God’s light; dominions, virtues, and powers receive and communicate; principalities, archangels, and angels receive that light and subsequently communicate to the ecclesiastical hierarchy of men within creation (*Coll. in Hex.* 22.5).

Even the material beings of the universe reflect the Trinity. All material beings are luminous (radiating light), opaque (receiving light), or translucent (receiving and transmitting light). They receive their being from outside themselves, and have their own essences and operations. God created their natures before time, separated their natures in the first three days of creation (luminous light on the first day, translucent waters on the second day, and opaque creatures on the third day), and provided for humanity during (p. 555) the second three days of creation (sun, moon, and stars from light; fish and birds from water; and mammals and reptiles from the earth).

Humanity is partly spiritual and partly material, thus joining together the highest and lowest parts of the universe. As material a human being possesses unity, truth, and goodness, as does every creature. As a rational creature, the soul of the human being has memory, intellect, and will, and as a deiform creature, perfected by grace, the human being has faith, hope, and charity.

Reflecting the Trinity in a most perfect way, the first parents were happy and could have merited eternal blessedness by cooperating with God’s grace. They abused their free will, however, choosing their own disordered desires over God’s will. The consequences of that abuse are felt everywhere in creation. Bonaventure’s theology of sin attempts to explain how sin originated and how many kinds of sin exist.

Bonaventure affirms the natural and supernatural gifts given to Adam and Eve, and describes how they sinned in the first place. Lucifer, who had chosen his own ‘personal good’ over the supreme Good (*Brev.* 2.7.3; De Vinck 1963: 88), was envious of the blessed humans God had created (*Brev.* 3.2.2). God allowed the devil to tempt the first parents, since God wanted to reward them with everlasting life for their meritorious obedience. That is, God wanted Adam and Eve to choose the highest Good of their own free will. Without freedom, there would be no union of love between God and humanity.

The devil tempted Eve first because he believed that she would be easier to deceive. He appealed to her three appetites: the rational through knowledge, the irascible through elevation, and the concupiscible through the sweet fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Sin occurred when the thought of superior knowledge was entertained; Eve then desired this knowledge and ate the fruit to obtain that knowledge. Adam sinned by preferring Eve’s friendship to God’s and taking the offered fruit.

The consequences of sin were immediate and affected all aspects of human nature. Bonaventure calls the loss of justice with which humanity was created original sin, and the freely chosen abandonment of God's unchanging power, truth, and goodness brought about weakness, ignorance, malice, and concupiscence (*Brev.* 4.5.3–4). The supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and charity were no longer present, and the three appetites were disordered. Because the soul could no longer see and enjoy God, beatific vision and heavenly glory could not be attained and the disorder of the soul affected the body. Pain, disease, and death became concomitant conditions of the soul that had lost its integrity. As Bonaventure puts it, 'By forsaking the changeless Good in favour of a perishable good, man becomes unworthy of both' (*Brev.* 4.5.5). In addition, after original sin, all human beings not aided by grace commit actual sins, which are recapitulations of the first sin; that is, they originate with a suggestion, a perceived satisfaction on committing a sin, the consent to sin, and finally the action.

Bonaventure formulates his Christology with creation's fallen state in mind. The salvation of humanity by Christ's passion and death is a fitting way for God to redeem humanity. God is not the creative Principle here, but the restorative Principle. Just as God's power, wisdom, and benevolence are manifest in creation, so too are they evident in the redemption of humanity:

(p. 556)

> What greater act of power than to combine within a single Person two extremely distant natures? What more suitable act of wisdom than to bring the universe to full perfection by uniting the First and the last: the Word of God, origin of all things, and the human creature, last to be made? What greater act of benevolence than for the Master to redeem the slave by taking the nature of a slave? This is, in truth, a deed of such unfathomable goodness that no greater proof of mercy, care, and love can be conceived.
>
> (*Brev.* 4.1.2; De Vinck 1963: 144)

The Trinity, as restorative Principle, brings about the Incarnation, but the role of mediator between God and man belongs properly to the Son.

One of the more distinctive features of Bonaventure's Christology arises as he reflects on the Son's role as mediator. Bonaventure sees Christ as the centre of the Trinity, the universe, and spiritual life. As the uncreated Word, Christ is the centre of the Trinity insofar as He is generated by the Father and with the Father spirates the Holy Spirit. Of the three divine Persons, only the Son receives and communicates the divine nature. As the incarnate Word, Christ is the centre of the universe insofar as His sacred humanity is a composite of spiritual and material elements and insofar as it was created at the midpoint of salvation history (for a sample account of Bonaventure's vision of salvation history with Christ at the centre see *Coll. In Hex.* 16.9.13 and *Brev.* 4.4.4). As the inspired Word, Christ's grace is given by the Holy Spirit to those who believe in the Word who has been

crucified (*Coll in Sept. don. Sp. Sanct.*). This grace communicated by the Holy Spirit unites man to the Father and the Son.

Just as it was fitting for the Son as centre of the Trinity to become the centre of the universe as a man, so was the manner of the Incarnation fitting. Bonaventure notes that sin arose when a woman believed the suggestion of an angel and her husband lustfully handed on original sin through the procreation of offspring. Christ's redemption of humanity was fitting, then, because, 'Conversely, and most fittingly, there was a good angel persuading to what was good, a Virgin believing him and consenting to the proposed good, and the love of the Holy Spirit making her both holy and fruitful for a virginal conception' (*Brev.* 4.3.3; De Vinck 1963: 151).

Another important element of Bonaventure's Christology is the central role played by Christ's crucifixion. The cruciform pattern of theology has already been noted, and in *The Journey of the Mind to God* contemplating the crucified Christ, as did Francis on Mount La Verna, represents the highest stage of mystical experience. 'Whoever loves this death may see God, for this is beyond doubt true: "No man sees Me and still lives" ', and then Bonaventure exhorts his readers, 'Let us die, then, and pass over into the darkness; let us silence every care, every craving, every dream; with Christ crucified, let us pass out of this world to the Father' (*Itin.* 7.6; De Vinck 1960: 58).

In the *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure treats the crucifixion more than any other event of Christ's life. In order to be a perfect mediator, Christ not only united divinity to materiality, but He also assumed human nature with such modifications (that is, with such assumed defects and penalties) that allowed Him to experience great pain and suffering. In (p. 557) order to restore creation from sin, 'it is most fitting that evils should be healed through their opposites' (*Brev.* 4.9.4; De Vinck 1963: 172), and so Christ overturned the pride, lust, and incurred death that brought sin into the world through humiliation, extreme pain, and a freely chosen death. Because Christ was the uncreated Word, as incarnate Word His merit was perfect. He was perfectly obedient to the Father and, as man, rendered to the Father the obedience that was justly due Him. This obedience brought life to humanity, and Christ descended to the dead to announce that new life and to lead 'His members out of hell' (*Brev.* 4.10.4). After He was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, He then sent the Holy Spirit to earth in order to perfect His mystical body, the Church (*Brev.* 4.10.8).

Bonaventure's account of the Holy Spirit's mission gives a key role to the Holy Spirit in the overall structure of Bonaventure's theology. Within the Trinity, the Spirit is the uncreated Gift, the Person who receives the divine nature without communicating it to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit's receptivity makes Him the most fitting Person to communicate the grace of God, since grace is a purely gratuitous gift. Although the Word is the 'origin and fountainhead of every free gift', the Holy Spirit accompanies these gifts:

> Grace is a gift bestowed and infused directly by God. For truly, together with grace and by means of grace, we receive the Holy Spirit, the uncreated Gift, the

> good and perfect Gift coming down from the Father of Lights through the Word made flesh.
>
> (*Brev*. 5.1.1-2; De Vinck 1963: 181)

The Holy Spirit imparts to humanity grace as a gift that liberates the will and allows the Christian to advance in virtue and merit. Bonaventure refers to grace primarily in three ways: first, as the general concurrence that allows creatures to exist; second, as actual grace that allows human beings to prepare for the reception of the 'gift of the Holy Spirit' (*Brev.* 5.2.2); and third, as sanctifying grace. As Bonaventure says:

> Grace, in the proper sense, consists of the divinely given assistance toward the actual acquiring of merit. This is the gift of 'sanctifying grace,' without which no one may acquire merit, advance in good, or attain eternal salvation. This grace, the root of all meriting, precedes any actual merit.
>
> (*Brev*. 5.2.2; De Vinck 1963: 185)

God made humanity capable of beatitude. This capacity presupposes not only existence, but also the possibility of freely choosing the Good and being rewarded for doing so. Having failed to choose the Good, the first parents lost the grace with which they were created and thus the possibility of being rewarded for making a choice for the Good. The Holy Spirit, in order to help humanity fulfil its natural desire for the Good, not only restores the grace that was lost, but elevates humanity in such a way that after the fulfillment of a life of holiness, the individual cannot fail to experience true beatitude, which is the vision and enjoyment of the triune God.

(p. 558) This elevation through sanctifying grace occurs in three ways. First, grace removes the vices acquired by the soul and infuses virtues. These virtues are the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity) and the four cardinal virtues (prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice). Second, grace repels the 'deviations of the vices' by bestowing the gifts of the Holy Spirit. 'Fear helps against pride, piety against envy, knowledge against anger … fortitude against sloth … counsel against covetousness, understanding against gluttony, and wisdom against lust' (*Brev.* 5.5.3; De Vinck 1963: 198). Third, grace leads to the seven beatitudes preached by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount: 'poverty of spirit, meekness, mourning, thirst for justice, mercy, cleanness of heart, and peacefulness' (*Brev.* 5.6.1; De Vinck 1963: 202).

The 'sevenfold grace' of the Holy Spirit is obtained through the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer and the seven sacraments, and it provides the seven virtues, gifts, and beatitudes, which can then 'overcome the sevenfold assault of the capital sins and attain the sevenfold crown of the endowments of glory' (*Brev.* 5.10.5; De Vinck 1963: 220).

Bonaventure next treats the seven sacraments as the ritual signs that lead to the seven gifts or endowments of glory. Following Hugh of St Victor, Bonaventure understands sacraments to be divinely instituted sacred signs that represent, signify, and impart grace to cure spiritual weakness. There are seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, Eu-

charist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony. Bonaventure believes that each sacrament removes the disease of sin, restores spiritual health, and then preserves it. Each sacrament overcomes one of the three kinds of sin (original, mortal, venial) or one of the four penalties of sin (weakness, ignorance, malice, and concupiscence), and restores principally one of the three theological virtues or one of the four cardinal virtues (see *Brev.* 6.3.2–3). The following list illustrates Bonaventure's schema:

Baptism – original sin – faith
Confirmation – weakness – hope
Eucharist – malice – charity
Penance – mortal sin – justice
Extreme unction – venial sin – fortitude
Orders – ignorance – prudence
Matrimony – concupiscence – temperance

Applying the imagery of spiritual warfare, Bonaventure summarizes the strengthening power of the sacraments by saying:

> Baptism is for those entering the battle, Confirmation for those fighting, Holy Eucharist for those recuperating, Penance for those rising anew, Extreme Unction for those about to leave, Orders for those bringing in new recruits, and Matrimony for those providing these recruits.
>
> (*Brev*. 6.3.4; De Vinck 1963: 232)

(p. 559) The last subject Bonaventure treats in the *Breviloquium* is divine judgement. God is the final cause, the goal of rational creatures, who perfects the universe. Revisiting the appropriations he had articulated in his Trinitarian theology, Bonaventure reminds his readers that just as creation manifests God's power and the providential governance of creation gives evidence of God's wisdom, so too does the perfection and consummation of the universe prove God's goodness (*Brev.* 7.1.2). Since God created humanity to be capable of eternal beatitude, it is fitting that He would assist the attainment of that goal by means of grace assisting the natural human operations. Without this assistance, rational creatures are incapable of attaining the purpose God had always intended for them, and yet their own free obedience is also necessary.

God manifests his supreme power, wisdom, and goodness in three ways when perfecting creation, according to Bonaventure. When God openly reveals the merits and demerits of every individual, God reveals His wisdom. His power is expressed in the passing of sentences on the just and the unjust, and His goodness is revealed in the reward of the just.

Human beings will experience this threefold perfection of creation and learn their fates both from themselves and from Jesus Christ who will appear in His glorious humanity to pronounce the Father's judgement (*Brev.* 7.1.1). Christ unveils the human conscience that already has pronounced judgement on itself. The just see both the divinity and humanity of Christ, whose judgement is perceived as an act of 'loving-kindness' (*Brev.* 7.1.1). The

unjust, however, see Christ only in His humanity, and they experience Christ's sentence as an expression of wrath. To both the just and the unjust, however, Christ appears in the 'same form' (*Brev.* 7.1.1).

Two antecedents precede the final judgement, and both pertain to the condition of the just in purgatory. The pain of purgatory is the first antecedent. The fire of purgatory reflects God's love and goodness:

> The first Principle, being first, is supremely good and perfect; and, being supremely good, supremely loves good and abhors evil; for, as supreme goodness suffers no good to be unrewarded, so also it cannot suffer any evil to remain unpunished. But some of the just die before having completed their penance on earth; and their right to life eternal cannot remain unsatisfied nor their guilt of sin unreproved, lest the beauty of universal order be disturbed.
>
> (*Brev.* 7.2.3; De Vinck 1963: 281–282)

Bonaventure conceives of the soul tainted by venial sin and in a state of grace to be burdened by guilt. Material fire is allowed to cause the soul pain, and this pain is the occasion for the soul to become detached from creatures. The soul finds the turning away from its freely chosen vices to be painful, but once the burden has been removed, 'they must take flight, for there is within them a fire of love that lifts them up' (*Brev.* 7.2.6; De Vinck 1963: 284).

(p. 560) The second antecedent consists of the suffrages of the Church. Mass and other kinds of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and penance can assist souls in purgatory. These actions are works of reparation offered by wayfarers on behalf of those who can no longer merit for themselves. The possibility of such an arrangement is rooted in God's mercy and in what still binds the living and dead together, namely the bonds of charity that allow both the living and the dead to comprise Christ's body.

The fire of judgement and the resurrection of the body are the two concomitants of the final judgement. Bonaventure envisions material fire consuming the earth and purifying it. The motion of the heavenly bodies will then cease and all of creation will be renewed. This consummating event mirrors what happens to humanity. Just as humanity became disordered through sin and was cleansed of vices, renewed through new spiritual and bodily gifts, and perfected when the full number of the elect was completed, so too was creation disordered and so too will it be cleansed and renewed through fire and perfected through peace (*Brev.* 7.4.3–7). The just and the unjust will rise again with the same bodies they had as wayfarers, and they will receive the fullness of grace, according to their merits and capacity, and their nature will be completed since their souls will perpetually infuse life into their restored bodies.

The two consequents to the final judgement are the pains of hell and the glory of heaven. In hell, a material fire affects both body and soul in proportion to each individual's guilt and attachment to vices. The factor that determines one's state in hell is final impeni-

tence, which is a permanent decision to reject God's justice. In heaven, the just experience not fire, but light. They see God face to face and enjoy and possess God eternally. The soul's vision of God as Light overflows into the body in such a way that the body radiates light. In addition, the soul's perfect love of the Holy Spirit allows the body to 'display a corresponding subtility and spirituality' (*Brev.* 7.7.4). The experience of eternal life renders the body impassible, and 'because these three gifts [clarity, subtility, and impassibility] together urge the soul most swiftly toward God, the glorified body must also possess supreme agility' (*Brev.* 7.7.4; De Vinck 1963: 306). In addition to the three gifts of the soul and the four gifts of the body, preachers, virgins, and martyrs receive an 'aureole', which is an additional honour that 'adorns, not only the soul, but also the body, since it is given, not to the will alone, but also to the external act' (*Brev.* 7.7.5; De Vinck 1963: 307). Once the righteous have received these rewards, they will have attained the status God had originally designed for them.

Spiritual Teaching

Bonaventure's spiritual teaching focuses on God's condescension to humanity in revelation and grace and the human response to God in faith, hope, and love. Christ is the perfect example of humility, suffering, poverty, and prayer, and Francis is the model Christian who exemplifies several qualities that become distinctive features in Bonaventure's spiritual teaching. Francis imitated Christ in his poverty and in the stigmata he bore when (p. 561) he experienced the crucified seraph on Mount La Verna in 1224. Francis's whole life was a preparation for that experience, and Bonaventure's *Legenda maior* describes Francis's life as corresponding to the Dionysian pattern of purification, illumination, and perfection that every Christian must experience in the ascent to God. Bonaventure finds in Francis's mystical experience a model for spiritual ascent to God. Dedication to poverty and asceticism detach one from selfishness, prayer and devotion to God cultivate charity, and extraordinary charismatic gifts manifest perfect union with God. *The Journey of the Mind to God* uses the details of Francis's ecstatic vision to illustrate how grace transforms the Christian by allowing the experience of the universe outside oneself, the experience of one's soul, and the experience of God to be a ladder of ascent. The six wings of the seraph signify six stages of ascent followed by a seventh in which moving from outside oneself to within oneself to above oneself is perfected only by an apophatic denial of sense perceptions and movements of the soul. The experience of this darkness is a sharing in Christ's passion and death, which allows one to move beyond the confines of the world. In the experience of this darkness, the soul is perfectly ordered (hierarchized) and the soul which came from God is brought back to God (*reductio*) by grace to perfect peace and contemplation.

Influence

Bonaventure’s writings are generally divided between those from his days as student and master of theology and those from his period as minister general. Bonaventure’s early theological works did not have the same influence as did those of his contemporary, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) ; and unlike his successors in the Franciscan tradition such as John Duns Scotus (1265/6-1308) and William of Ockham (*c*.1287-1347), Bonaventure did not establish a ‘school’ of thought based on a system of philosophy or theological outlook. Nonetheless, until the rise of Scotus’s theology in the early fourteenth century, various aspects of Bonaventure’s theology were influential on such Franciscans as John Peckham (*c*.1230-1292) and Matthew of Aquasparta (1240-1302). He was a leading proponent of Augustinian illuminationism and yet he also engaged Aristotle repeatedly, both sympathetically and critically. He was able to appropriate Greek authorities such as Dionysius and John of Damascus as well as to draw from twelfth-century theologians and spiritual writers. Bonaventure was also clearly aware of the significance of contemporary events, as can be seen in his defence of mendicant poverty and his criticisms of an Averroistic strand of Aristotelianism at the University of Paris.

Although a Bonaventurian revival, beginning in Rome, occurred in the universities only in the sixteenth century, Bonaventure’s later spiritual writings became influential very quickly. Works such as the *Tree of Life* and *The Journey of the Mind to God* became important works for fourteenth- and fifteenth-century writers such as Jan van Ruusbroec (1293-1381), Jean Gerson (1363-1429), Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) and the various founders of the *Devotio moderna* in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,

(p. 562) After the rise of Thomism in the nineteenth century, Bonaventure’s theology found acceptance among several influential Catholic theologians. Although mentioned briefly by Leo XIII in *Aeterni patris*, the encyclical that promoted the study of Thomas Aquinas, some theologians found aspects of Bonaventure’s thought more compatible with certain trends of modern theology in the twentieth century. Karl Rahner, for example, appreciated the implications of Bonaventure’s emphasis on exemplar causality and Bonaventure’s articulation of the spiritual senses. Gottlieb Söhngen found Bonaventure’s discussion of the relationship between nature and grace (involved in the concept of *anologia entis*) an insightful alternative to Thomas Aquinas. Hans Urs von Balthasar appropriated the Trinitarian and Christological foundations of Bonaventure’s use of imagery and beauty to develop his own theological aesthetics, and Joseph Ratzinger was influenced by Bonaventure’s theology of history. Some of Bonaventure’s central themes have also been influential on recent spiritual writers who have developed his concepts of divine self-diffusion, the goodness of creation, and the centrality of Christ and the Cross.

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Early Modern Catholic Theology (1500–1700)

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Abstract and Keywords

This essay considers Catholic theology between 1500 and 1700. Theology of this period was an essential point of reference for such theologians as Cardinal Newman, but is today unfortunately neglected. This was the period that saw the flowering of the great schools of Thomistic interpretation, as well as much important mystical writing, especially by Carmelites. Disciples of Duns Scotus made significant contributions to Christology and Mariology. During these centuries scholars laid the foundations for modern study of the Patristic period, and developed detailed reflection on the nature and purpose of inter-religious dialogue. Many of the distinctive themes of twentieth century theology--from Thomist to those of the ressourcement school--find their roots in this period.

Keywords: Catholicism, Trent, sacraments, baroque, Thomism, Bellarmine, Juan de Lugo, Petavius

Petavius and Newman: An Object Lesson

JOHN Henry Newman (1801–90) is often credited with a particularly enlightening account of the development of doctrine. Before his celebrated conversion, Newman agreed with the theory advanced in the *Harmonia Apostolica* (1669–70) and *Defensio Fidei Nicaenae* (1685) of the Anglican Bishop George Bull (d. 1710), who had argued that apparent doctrinal differences among the Church fathers were verbal developments of a single idea shared by the apostolic tradition. Newman, writing the first volume of his *Via Media* in 1837, vigorously supported his Anglican predecessor gainst the Jesuit theologian Dionysius Petavius (d. 1652):

> This it was which excited the zeal of our great theologian, Bishop Bull, whom I will here quote, both in order to avail myself of his authority, and because of the force and clearness of his remarks. In the introduction then of his elaborate work, after enumerating certain heretical and latitudinarian attempts to disparage the orthodoxy of the Ante-Nicene centuries, he speaks as follows of Petavius; —

> But I am beyond measure astonished at that great and profoundly learned man, Dionysius Petavius; who for all the reverence he professes for the Nicene Council, and his constant acknowledgement that the faith confirmed in it, against the Arians, is truly Apostolic and Catholic, yet makes an admission to them, which, if it holds, goes the full length of establishing their heresy, and of disparaging, and so overthrowing, the credit and authority of the Nicene Church; namely, that the Rulers and Fathers of the Church before its date were nearly all of the very same sentiments as Arius. … What was Petavius's view in so writing, it is difficult to say. Some suspect that he was secretly an Arian, and wished by these means insidiously to recommend the heresy to others. This was the opinion of Sandius, (the heretical writer). However, Petavius's own writings make it, I think, abundantly clear, that this pretender's (p. 564) supposition is altogether false. If some underhand purpose must be assigned for his writing as he did, and it be not sufficient to ascribe it to his customary audacity and recklessness in criticizing and animadverting on the Holy Fathers, I should give my opinion that this author, as being a Jesuit, had in view the interest of popery rather than Arianism.

Bishop Bull's passage continues at some length. Newman concludes its quotation with the following:

> That such a nefarious purpose led to Petavius's statement, I do not dare to say for certain, but leave the matter to the heartsearching God. Meanwhile, what the Jesuit has written, as it is most welcome to modern Arians (all of whom on that account revere and embrace him as their champion), so, as I would affirm it confidently, it is manifestly contrary to truth, and most injurious and slanderous as well towards the Nicene Fathers as the Ante-Nicene.

Newman adds his own rousing approbation in conclusion:

> So remarkable an instance as this is not for everyday's occurrence. I do not mean to say that there have been many such systematic and profound attempts as this on the part of Petavius, at what may be justly called parricide. Rome even, steeled as she is against the kindlier feelings, when it is required by her interests, has more of tender mercy left than to bear them often.

Steeling himself against the 'parricide' of Petavius, Newman appealed to the venerable Vincentian idea that the Church teaches only 'what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all' (*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*). All this, for Newman, was soon to change. In an oft-quoted passage from the *Apologia*, he would later write:

> My stronghold was Antiquity; now here, in the Middle of the Fifth Century, I found, as it seemed to me, Christendom of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries reflected. I saw my face in that mirror, and I was a Monophysite. The

> Church of the Via Media was in the position of the Oriental Communion; Rome was where she is now; and the Protestants were the Eutychians.

As Newman would relate, his theory of the *Via Media* was ‘pulverized’, he saw the ‘hitch’ in the Anglican argument, and he realized that ‘the Roman Church was Catholic Church, and the Anglican Church was no Church’. Newman was received into the Church and worked out his own account of the development of doctrine in the process. When two Jesuits from the Collegio Romano attacked Newman’s theology, they themselves—as Newman complains in his letter to Dalgairns of 15 November 1846—took the part of Bull against Petavius (Broker 1938).

I need not rehearse the rest of this story, and I happily refer readers to the chapter on the development of doctrine in this volume. I have told the story so far because I believe (p. 565) it serves as a useful object lesson for theologians interested in the history of doctrine. Usually, when learning of the development of doctrine, one begins with the Catholic assertion of the Vincentian principle by Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (d. 1704), but one rarely learns the history of the ideas that led up to Bossuet himself. Indeed, Newman the Tractarian could look upon Bossuet with a measure of sympathy before his own conversion, even as he condemned Petavius. It is no small irony that the Jesuit’s ‘parricide’, so ‘manifestly contrary to truth’ and ‘slanderous’ to the Fathers, was nothing other than an embryonic form of Newman’s own theory of the development of doctrine.

The Historical Context of Tridentine Theology

I have taken this roundabout way of introducing my topic to make an obvious point: while the theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has had a profound influence on Catholic theology during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, its influence is often ignored and its greatest theologians are often unread. With the exception of its spiritual writers—who have been appropriated for various fads in ‘mysticism’—the leading lights of the Renaissance and the baroque appear most often in contemporary works as foils. We are told that early modern scholasticism had become moribund by over-emphasizing polemics, that its theologians lacked any real historical awareness, that nominalism ruled the roost, that the laity was uneducated and mired in useless, mechanical devotions. Above all, we hear—from both traditionalists and progressives—of an oppressive cultural hegemony that threatens the Church even now and which must at all costs be overcome, either by a retreat to the Middle Ages or by a bold march into the future. Too old for *aggiornamento*, but too modern for *ressourcement*, the great theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been reduced to straw men in Just So stories about secularization, modernity, and nihilism.

It does not take much to realize that the denigration of Tridentine theology has largely followed a liberal Protestant reading of the Renaissance and the so-called Counter-Reformation. Nor is it a surprise that such rhetoric was adopted by generations of Catholics eager to assimilate into modern industrial culture, and the exigencies of modern academic culture make it exceedingly difficult to study these works. This state of affairs is unfortu-

nate, to say the least, for there is hardly a single aspect of theology at the turn of the third millennium that was not pioneered during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We see the beginnings of modern biblical criticism, the first widespread editions of the Church fathers, the flowering of the Augustinian, Thomist, and Scotist schools of theology, the great syntheses of spiritual theology, the dissemination of a distinct theological literature intended for laypeople, and speculative works in controversial theology and interreligious dialogue that have yet to be equalled. Such (p. 566) an embarrassment of riches could be expanded considerably; suffice it to say that the Church, despite the protestations of traditionalists and progressives, arguably saw its most dramatic and successful period of *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is difficult to summarize the achievements of the age, even if we leave aside its obvious accomplishments in art, literature, and music. Among the more general trends we see a greater concern for historicity and textual accuracy, the consolidation of the heritage of the Church, and the globalization of Catholicism. Reform Councils of Seville (1478) and the Fifth Lateran (1512–17) lead off the age. Companies of laypeople united for the pursuit of Christian perfection through shared prayer and social work, such as the Brotherhood of St Jerome or the Brotherhood of Divine Love spring up in Italy, Spain, and France. As the Italian *compagnie* of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries wane in influence, the great Marian congregations and sodalities of the sixteenth and seventeenth rise to continue their internal missions to the Church. Nor is this fervour limited to laypeople. Much of the reforming spirit of the fifteenth century blossomed in the sixteenth, when Aegidius of Viterbo (d. 1532) oversaw the reform of the Augustinian Hermits as Tommaso de Vio, or Cajetan (d. 1534), reformed the Dominicans. The General Chapter of 1517 divided the Franciscans into Conventuals and Observants, with the Capuchins, a reform order within the Franciscans, being approved by Pope Clement VII in 1528. Starting in 1523, the Carmelites underwent a series of reforms that culminated in 1562. There was also an explosion of new religious orders, including the Theatines (1524), the Angelicals (1530), the Barnabites (1533), the Ursulines (1536), the Somaschi (1540), and most notably, the Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits (1540).

The Council of Trent (1545–63) is the theological touchstone of the era, and the most important developments in theology during the period can be seen as leading to the council or flowing from it (see also Chapter 37 within this volume). The Council of Trent presented the definitive Catholic teaching on the canon of Scripture, the importance of the apostolic tradition, and the application of biblical hermeneutics. It also addressed the theological topics questioned by Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, especially original sin, justification, purgatory, and the sacraments. The council consolidated the earlier reform movements and created a theological style that lasted well into the twentieth century. Nor did the Holy See simply address itself to the problem of Protestantism: it offered pronouncements on specific topics in the theology of grace in Catholic theology, condemning the respective errors of Michael Baius (1567), quelling the debates between Dominicans and Jesuits in the *de auxiliis* controversy (1607), and attempting, as best it could, the suppression of the heresy of Jansenism (1658, 1690). It mediated the debate between Jesuits and their rivals over frequent communion (1687), and it intervened in controversies in spiritu-

al theology by censoring the quietism of Miguel Molinos (1687) and forbidding Madame Guyon's doctrine of 'pure love' (1700).

(p. 567) Humanism and Positive Theology

The ferment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is often credited to the influence —salutary or otherwise—of humanism, that loose confederation of orators, poets, and scholars who resuscitated the ancient Greek and Latin classics. A motley crew of the sincerely pious and the rudely erudite, the age to which we owe the pejorative term 'medieval' has become as mysterious and double-pronged as one of its own emblems. Its 'prince' was Desiderius Erasmus (d. 1536), whose *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1503) and *Epistola ad Philosophiae Christianae studium* (1519–20) charted the course for humanist theology. Among Erasmus's greatest contributions to the Church was *De libero arbitrio diatribe sive collatio* (1524), his defence of the freedom of the will against Martin Luther. Less studied is Erasmus's response to Luther's rebuttal, the *Hyperaspistes* (1526–27). Much of the debate between Erasmus and Luther revolved around the interpretation of the Bible and, perhaps more importantly, its relationship to the larger patristic tradition. One might easily lose sight of the nature of their debate unless one recalls that Western Europe was largely ignorant of the Greek patristic heritage during the Middle Ages, and even so venerable an authority as Augustine was known more through *florilegia* than through complete texts. By the late fourteenth century, scholars were ransacking libraries for manuscripts of the Latin fathers, and Greek manuscripts began to enter the West rapidly after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Truth be told, a good working knowledge of Greek was still hard to come by in the fifteenth century. By the turn of the century, aided by the invention of the printing press, this situation began to change. Erasmus produced his edition of the Greek New Testament in 1516, and the Observant Franciscan Ximenes de Cisneros (1436-1517), the cardinal and archbishop of Toledo, established the University of Alcalá as a leading centre of humanism with the publication of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible in 1514–17. The Antwerp Polyglot appeared in 1569–72, the Clementine Vulgate in 1592, and the Paris Polyglot in 1629–45. The invention of the printing press also led to the first genuine attempts to educate laypeople on a large scale. Probably the best known examples of such works are the catechisms written by St Peter Canisius (d. 1597) and St Robert Bellarmine (d. 1621). Much of the great theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries centred on Biblical hermeneutics, and many of the luminaries of humanism, such as St Thomas More (d. 1535), Johann Eck (d. 1542), Joannes Cochlaeus (d. 1552), Joannes Gropper (d. 1559), and Thomas Stapleton (d. 1598), became able controversialists. Against the Protestant exclusion of the spiritual senses of Scripture, scholastic theologians such as the Jesuit Francisco Toledo (d. 1596) argued that the fourfold interpretation of Scripture was a dogma of the faith. After the great Dominican exegete Cajetan (d. 1534), most of the leading biblical commentators among the religious orders were Jesuits, such as Juan Maldonado (d. 1583), Manoel de Sá (d. 1596), Willem Hessels van Est (d. 1613), and Cornelius à Lapide (d. 1637).

(p. 568) The Renaissance also saw the publication of a vast amount of Greek patristic literature. An edition of Origen's *Homilies*, for example, appeared in 1475, with the *Contra Celsum* appearing in 1481. Aldus published his edition of Origen in 1503. Latin translations of his collected works were published in 1512 and 1519, and then augmented over the next two decades. Erasmus's edition of Origen, which was completed by Beatus Rhenanus (d. 1547), saw the light of day in 1536 and was reprinted in 1557 and again 1571. Gregory of Nyssa's works appeared in a two-volume edition in 1615 and a new, expanded three-volume edition in 1638. The *Philocalia* appeared in Latin translation in 1618 and the Greek text was published in 1624. Such a list could be expanded almost indefinitely. This explosion of patristic texts led to pioneering works of positive theology, such as the *De locis theologicis* of the Dominican Melchior Cano (d. 1560) and the *Commentarii theologici* of the Jesuit Gregory of Valencia (d. 1603), both of whom applied the lessons of humanism to scholastic theology. A somewhat more independent approach can be seen in the Oratorian Louis Thomassin (d. 1695), but the true master of the genre is Petavius, whose *Opus de theologicis dogmatibus* influenced Matthias Scheeben and continued to provide theologians with patristic proof texts well into the twentieth century. With its abundance of Greek sources and impeccable Latin, Petavius's work gives the lie to the myth that moribund scholasticism dominated the age. As with Petavius's debate with Bull, the positive theology of the day was increasingly concerned with controversy: a good example is the *Perpétuité de la foi de l'Église catholique touchant l'eucharistie* (1669–71) of the French Jansenist Pierre Nicole (d. 1695).

The humanists' enthusiasm for ancient Christian literature was coupled with an enthusiasm for ancient pagan literature, and the revival of Greek and Roman antiquities led to some of the odder theological works of the age, such as the *In librum primum Sententiarum ad mentem Platonis* of Aegidius of Viterbo (d. 1532), in which the Augustinian humanist 'commented' on the text of Peter Lombard by identifying vestiges of the Trinity in Plato's *Dialogues* and a formidable series of pagan myths. Much in the same vein are the writings of the Franciscan Francesco Giorgi (d. 1540), whose *De harmonia mundi totius* (1525) is the most significant work of the Christian Kabbalah. Since religious orders often selected those who had excelled in Greek and Latin as missioners, it is no surprise that much of the theology of the missions has a strongly humanistic flavour. The Franciscan Juan de Zumárraga (d. 1548), the first archbishop of Mexico, was a noted Erasmian. Not surprisingly, the humanists of the missions delighted in producing dictionaries, grammars, and doctrinal treatises. Some of these are quite vast, such as the five-volume *Spiritual Teaching* (*Ñāna Upatēcam Kāṇṭam, c.*1638–42) of the Jesuit Roberto de Nobili (d. 1656). Other works, such as the *True Meaning of the 'Lord of Heaven'* (*Tianzhu shiyi*) of Matteo Ricci (d. 1610), or *The Truth-Showing Mirror* (*Āyine-ye Haqq Numā*) of Jerónimo Xavier (d. 1617), are dialogues written on interreligious controversies. The writings of the Jesuit José de Acosta (d. 1600), such as *De Procuranda Indorum salute* (1588) and *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590), similarly demonstrate the deep ties between humanism and the New World missions. Perhaps the best known of such works is the 'Florentine Codex', the *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* of the Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún (d. 1590). Much as the early humanists (p. 569) saw the writings

of Pythagoras or Hermes Trismegistus as anticipations of Christian revelation, Jesuit 'figurists' such as Joachim Bouvet (d. 1732) and Jean-François Foucquet (d. 1741) thought that ancient Chinese classics such as the *Daodejing* and *Yijing* foretold Christ's coming.

Humanism at home contained much of theological interest even when it was not caught up in controversy. The voluminous works of the Jesuit polymath Athanasius Kircher (d. 1680) are a case in point. Kircher's immense *Musurgia universalis* concludes with a long theology of music; among such works, we might also include the *De pictura sacra* and the *Musaeum* of Federico Borromeo (d. 1631). The burgeoning historical sense of the age is exemplified by the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* of the Oratorian Richard Simon (d. 1712), who is often credited with the invention of the historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible. It is less known that Simon also wrote the *Fides ecclesia orientalis*, an ecumenical work meant to show that the Eastern and Western Churches did not disagree on Eucharistic teaching. A cursory glance reveals several other large-scale historical projects, such as the *Annales ecclesiastici* (1588–1607) of Caesar Baronius (d. 1607), the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists, and the multifaceted scholarship of the Benedictines of St Maur, which embraced biblical studies, patrology, ecclesiastical history, and liturgical studies. To this age we also owe the great histories of the religious orders, such as the *Imago primi saeculi* published to commemorate the centennial of the Society of Jesus in 1640 or the massive, unfinished *Orbis Seraphicus* of the Franciscans. Pietro Sforza Pallavacini (d. 1667), the famous historiographer of the Council of Trent, must be mentioned among the great Italian historians of the age. Other important ecclesiastical historians were the Jesuit Louis Maimbourg (d. 1686), Louis Sébastien la Nain de Tillemont (d. 1698) and, of course, Bossuet (d. 1704), whose *Histoire de variations des églises protestantes* led the Anglican Newman to complain of 'Romish variations'.

Scholastic and Speculative Theology

The general trend of early modern scholasticism is towards consolidation and commentary. Among Thomists the *Summa theologiae* became the basis of lectures and commentaries, with the outstanding example offered by Cajetan (d. 1534). Benedictines such as José Saenz de Aguirre (d. 1699) and Niccolò Maria Tedeschi (d. 1730) wrote commentaries on the works of St Anselm, and Cistercians such as Albericus Burghoff (d. 1665) and Laurentius a San Petro Apusius (d. 1681) wrote theological syntheses based on the writings of St Bernard of Clairvaux. The Augustinian tradition was consolidated and revived by theologians such as Henry Noris (d. 1715), Federico Gavardi (d. 1715), and Gianlorenzo Berti (d. 1766). Carmelites who did not follow the teaching of St Thomas often commented on John Baconthorpe, as we see in the *Theologia Baconiana* of Dionisio Blasco (d. 1683). The Servites, who adopted Henry of Ghent as their common doctor, kept the writings of their master alive in works such as the *Disputationes theologicae juxta genuinam Henrici de Gandavo Mentem* of Benedetto Maria Canali (d. 1743). (p. 570) The early modern period also saw the creation of full courses of philosophy and theology taken from the teachings of individual doctors, as we see in the *Cursus philosophicus et theologicus thomisticus* of John of St Thomas (d. 1644), the *Paradisus philosophicus et theo-*

logicus of the Bonaventurian Marcus de Baudunio (d. 1692), or the *Philosophia et theologia scholae scotisticae* of Crescentius Krisper (d. 1749). Probably the most famous of the Thomistic courses was the *Cursus Salmanticensis* prepared by the Carmelites at Salamanca. Occasionally, one sees the reordering of the teachings of St Bonaventure or Blessed John Duns Scotus along the lines of St Thomas's *Summa theologiae* in Franciscan works of this period. The most famous of such attempts is probably the *Duns Scoti Summa theologica* of Hieronymus Montefortino (d. 1738). To this one could add Petrus Trigosus (d. 1593) and Francesco Coriolano (d. 1622) among Bonaventurians and the *Summa sacrae theologiae* of the Scotist Angelus Vulpes (d. 1647). Among the most interesting trends of the day, we see an effort by several theologians to harmonize the teachings of different doctors, a trend that seems most apparent among Franciscans such as Felix Gabriel de Ascuto (d. 1684), Matthias Hauzeur (d. 1676), or the aforementioned Marcus de Baudunio (d. 1692).

The commentarial tradition also benefited from the most recent philosophical scholarship. Important contributions in metaphysics were made by Pedro da Fonseca (d. 1599), whose *Commentariorum in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae* established a critical Greek text, provided a new Latin translation, and offered extensive commentary and disputations. Towering over the entire field is the *Disputationes Metaphysicae* of Francisco Suárez (d. 1617). Sometimes scholastic theologians became able controversialists and here, as elsewhere, the Jesuits excelled. One thinks immediately of Suárez's *Defensio Fidei Catholicae* (1613) against the Anglicans, but without a doubt the greatest controversialist of this or any age was St Robert Bellarmine, whose *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei adversus hujus temporis hereticos* (1586–89) remains the standard in the field. Both Jesuits also wrote treatises on prayer, with Bellarmine being especially fruitful, writing *De ascensione mentis in Deum, De septem verbis a Christo in cruce prolatis,* and *De genitu columbae sive de bono lacrymarum*, this last work no doubt being influenced by the particular gift of St Ignatius. In moral theology, the most important works were generally written by Jesuits: one thinks immediately of the *Theologiae moralis summa* of Enrique Henriquez (d. 1608) or the *Opus morale in praecepta Decalogi* of Tomás Sánchez (d. 1610).

The diversity of views represented by scholasticism in this period is perhaps its most striking feature. Take, for example, the problem of the so-called 'motive' of the Incarnation. Dominicans such as Cajetan (d. 1534), Silvester Ferrariensis (d. 1528), Bartholomew de Medina (d. 1580), Domingo Bañez (d. 1604), and John of St Thomas (d. 1644) conceded such ground to Duns Scotus on this question that they can only be called 'mitigated' Thomists, while the 'strict' Thomist position was often defended by Jesuits such as Maldonatus (d. 1583), Francisco Toletus (d. 1596), Leonardus Lessius (d. 1623), and—most forcefully—Gabriel Vazquez (d. 1604). Still other Jesuits such as Alphonsus Salmerón (d. 1695) and Pedro Fonseca (d. 1599) took a decidedly Scotist view of this question, as did Domincans such as Ambrosius Catharinus (d. 1553) and (p. 571) Jacobus Naclantus (d. 1569). Two of the most fervent defenders of the Scotist view were the Capuchin Salvator Montalbanus (d. 1726) and the Jesuit John de Campoverde (d. 1737). Generally, the great theologians of the Observant and Conventual Franciscans, such as Bartholomaeus Mas-

trius (d. 1673) and Claude Frassen (d. 1711), followed Scotus, but no less a Franciscan theologian than Francisco Macedo (d. 1681) followed the minority position of Francisco Suárez (d. 1673), who had attempted a *tertia via* between Thomas and Scotus. When we look at how these debates continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, no particular 'schools' come into sight. If anything, there is an even greater diversity of viewpoints. Few of the leading theologians of the twentieth century, for example, have held the strict Thomist view. Dominicans such as Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Charles Vincent Héris, and Édouard Hugon have generally followed the lead of Cajetan, thus pursuing a 'mitigated' Thomism, while Erich Przywara and the erstwhile Jesuit Hans Urs von Balthasar are perhaps best seen as representatives of a newly emergent Suárezian tradition. If the great Scotist theologians Déodat Marie de Basly and Juniper Carol can be seen as providing a decisive direction for the ongoing debate, arguably the greatest Franciscan theologian of the twentieth century, Jean-François Bonnefoy, took a highly idiosyncratic view of the 'Scotist' position, and is sometimes credited with a new approach to the topic altogether.

The question of the reason for the Incarnation is one among several topics developed quite substantially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Mariology also saw a particular development, spurred along by the *De Maria Virgine Incomparabile* of St Peter Canisius (d. 1597) and the *De Mysteriis vitae Christi* of Francisco Suárez (d. 1617). Among the Franciscans, the sermons of the Capuchin St Lorenzo da Brindisi (d. 1619) are important sources of Marian doctrine. Of particular importance for early modern theology, too, is the controversy over the *debitum peccati* that erupted after debates at Toledo, Alcalá, and Seville in the early seventeenth century. The most important treatises that arose after these debates include the *Pro Immaculata Deipare Virginis Conceptione defensio* of Ferdinand Chirinus de Salazar (d. 1646), the *Disputationes* of Angelus Vulpes (d. 1647), and the *Certamen scholasticum expositum argumentum* of Tomás Francés Urrutigoyti (d. 1692). The Salmanticenses have a wonderfully thorough *disputatio* on the question, but arguably the most profound treatment of the question can be found in the work of the Capuchin Salvator Montalbanus (d. 1722). The other important Mariological debate of the day concerned Mary's predestination; apart from the usual Scotist suspects, many of whom were mentioned above, important works were also written by the Jesuits Christopher de Vega (d. 1672) and Sebastian Izquierdo (d. 1680). John Novati (d. 1648), who summarizes and synthesizes the positions of Aquinas, Scotus, Suárez, and Salazar, took an especially independent approach.

Much the same could be said for the important developments in Eucharistic theology. Almost every major contributor to twentieth-century Eucharistic theology draws on early modern authorities: the 'Thomist' positions of Louis Billot and Charles Journet, for example, have their roots in Juan de Lugo (d. 1570), Suárez (d. 1617), and Bellarmine (d. 1621), even as they attempt to move beyond the 'destruction theories' of sacrifice found in these Jesuit theologians (Clark 1960). Marius Lepin claimed the patrimony of Bérulle (p. 572) (d. 1629), Condren (d. 1641), and Olier (d. 1657) for his theory of an 'inner oblation'. The 'mystery presence' (*mysteriengegenwart*) of Dom Odo Casel and the related theories of Abbot Vonier or Eugène Masure are indebted to similar notions, especially the

Berullian ‘states’ (*etats*) of Christ. It is impossible to imagine the greatest work of Eucharistic theology of the twentieth century, Maurice de la Taille’s *Mysterium Fidei*, apart from the early modern influence. On the one hand, the Jesuit draws freely on Greek patristic sources in a way that would have been impossible before the modern period, but also provides a truly encyclopedic reading of early modern sources, such as the *Apologiae seu Defensionis Decretorum Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini* of Jodocus Ravesteyn Tiletanus (d. 1570), or the *Orthodoxarum explicationum libri decem* of Diego Andrada de Payva (d. 1575).

Another aspect of the scholasticism of this period that differs considerably from that of the thirteenth—and rather looks forward to the twentieth—is that theologians often wrote full monographs on subjects that may have received a page or two at best from Aquinas or Scotus. The Dominican Vincentius Asturicensis (d. 1595), for example, advocated a ‘mitigated’ Thomist view of the reason of the Incarnation over 243 dense pages in the sixth question of his *Relectio de habituali Christi salvatoris nostri sanctificante gratia* (1591). Important early monographs include the *De natura et gratia* of the Dominican Domingo Soto (d. 1560) and the *De justificatione* of the Franciscan Andreas de Vega (d. 1560), both of which were prepared for the Council of Trent. Jesuits seemed to excel at such monographs: no less an authority than Matthias Scheeben judged the *De Trinitate* (1625) of Didachus Ruiz de Montoya (d. 1660) to be the best book written on the subject. Another example, which should be studied assiduously by anyone with an interest in early modern precursors to current Vatican teaching on the salvation of non-Christians is the *De fide* of Juan de Lugo (d. 1570). Another important monograph is the immense *De ente supernaturali* (1634–48) of the Jesuit Juan Martínez de Ripalda (d. 1648), which is often said to anticipate the better insights of Karl Rahner without the Kantian complications of transcendental Thomism (Perry 1998). The most celebrated example of this sort of monograph, of course, is the *Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis* of Luis de Molina (d. 1600), the source of the drawn-out *de auxiliis* controversy between Dominicans and Jesuits.

When one thinks of scholasticism and the missions one immediately recalls the great debate between the Dominican Bartolomé de las Casas (d. 1566) and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (d. 1573) during the Vallodolid junta of 1550. Much of the tone for this debate and the developments that followed was set by the *Relectio de Indis recenter inventis* (1539) and *Relectio de iure belli* (1539) of the Dominican Francisco de Vitoria (d. 1546). Vitoria’s influence can be seen in the New World in the *De dominio* of the Augustinian Alonso de la Vera Cruz (d. 1584) and the apocalyptic social justice programmes of the Jesuit missionary Antonio Vieira (d. 1697). The New World produced scholastic authors of some note, too. The Dominican Tomás de Mercado (d. 1579) wrote a *Suma de tratos y contratos* that anticipated several of the economic ideas of Adam Smith, while the *Logica mexicana* of the Jesuit Antonio Rubio (d. 1615) contained an important discussion of analogy. The Chilean Jesuit Miguel Viñas (d. 1718) made important contributions to (p. 573) scholastic philosophy in the early modern period, especially with the account of ‘supertranscendentals’ in his *Philosophia scholastica* (Doyle 2007). The mass translation of Aristotle and Western scientific treatises in the China mission is well known. Perhaps the most interest-

ing is Alfonso Vagone's *Xiushen xixue*, a free Chinese rendering of Aquinas's *Secunda pars*. The Tibetan scholastic treatises of the Jesuit Ippolito Desideri (d. 1733) such as *The Origin of Sentient Beings and Other Phenomena* (*sems can dang chos la sogs pa rnams kyi 'byung khungs,* 1718) and the *Questions about Rebirth and Emptiness Offered to the Scholars of Tibet by the European Lama Ippolito* (*mgo skar bla ma i po li do zhes bya ba yis phul ba'i bod kyi mkhas pa rnams la skye ba snga ma dang stong pa nyid kyi lta ba'i sgo nas zhu ba, c.*1718–21) provided Thomistic rejoinders to Buddhist arguments against the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.

Spiritual Theology

The flowering of Christian spirituality in the early modern period has its roots, like the theology of the humanists, in the reforms of the fifteenth century. St Augustine and Dionysius remained the twin pillars of the Western spiritual tradition, with St Bernard of Clairvaux, the Victorines, and the Carthusians providing a common medieval foundation for later developments. By the beginning of the modern period 'mystical theology' had become a separate genre of theology, defined largely by the notion that mystical ecstasy transcended the ratiocination more commonly used in the scholastic theology, an idea that humanists such as Josse Clichtove (d. 1543), Charles de Bovelles (d. 1553), and Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples (d. 1563) found congenial. Lefèvre, for example, promoted the idea in the preface to his own edition of Richard of St Victor's *De superdivina Trinitate* (1510). It is important, however, not to divorce the classics of spiritual and mystical theology from the large theological currents of the day. The two most important spiritual writers of the New World, for example, the Ursuline Marie de l'Incarnation (d. 1672) and the incomparable Juana Inés de la Cruz (d. 1695), are arguably studied more by cultural studies aficionados than by theologians. It is also important to understand that a great deal of the spiritual writing of the day was integrated into scholastic theology. Twentieth century masterpieces, such as the Dominican Juan Arintero's *La evolucíon mystica* or the Jesuit Auguste Poulain's *Grâces d'Oraison* seem impressive but awkward when one forgets the seventeenth-century textbooks upon which these were based. Perhaps the greatest among these was the *Summa theologiae mysticae* of the Carmelite Philippe de Sainte-Trinité (d. 1671). Other representative examples include the *Cursus theologiae mystico-scholasticae* of the Carmelite José del Espiritu Santo (d. 1639) and the *Theologia mystica S. Thomae* of the Dominican Tomás de Vallgornera (d. 1665).

One genre that received special attention during this period was the genre of 'spiritual exercises'. García de Cisneros, cousin of the great cardinal and reformer, wrote *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual*, which influenced the greatest example of the genre, the *Exercitia spiritualia* of St Ignatius of Loyola (d. 1556). The voluminous commentaries (p. 574) on St Ignatius's *Exercises* can be read as spiritual treatises in their own right. Particularly interesting examples include the *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* of Jerónimo Nadal (d. 1580) and the rhetorically charged *Iter animae ad Deum* of Giovanni Battista Conti (d. 1723). One commentary that continued to have great influence into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even after the promulgation of Roothaan's *Ratio meditan-*

di, was the *Christiani hominis judicia et mores correcti* of the saintly Benedetto Rogacci (d. 1719). A large vernacular literature written to engender the practice of meditation among laypeople also exists. The Jesuit Giovanni Pinamonti's *L'Inferno aperto* (1684), under its English title *Hell Opened to Sinners*, served as the model for the hair-raising sermon preached by Father Arnall in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Doherty 1963). Emblem books with less threatening meditations were also written by the Jesuits Herman Hugo (d. 1629), Jeremias Drexel (d. 1638), and Maximilian van der Sandt (d. 1656). Alphonsus Rodriguez (d. 1616) wrote a particularly influential three-volume work on ascetical theology. The *Direttorio ascetico* and *Direttorio mistico* of Giovanni Battista Scaramelli (d. 1751) are of particular interest, since the Jesuit's division of the three ages of the spiritual life into two streams, ascetic and mystical, was the chief target of Garrigou-Lagrange's later fulminations.

The great tradition of the age, of course, was the Carmelite tradition. Not only did the Carmelites produce St Teresa of Jesus (d. 1582) and St John of the Cross (d. 1591), they boasted of saints such as Maria Maddalena de Pazzi (d. 1607) and spiritual theologians such as Tomás de Jesus (d. 1627), Philippe de Sainte-Trinité (d. 1671), and Laurent de la Résurrection (d. 1691). The Franciscan influence on the Carmelite tradition is sometimes forgotten. St Teresa was influenced, for example, by the *Abecedario espiritual* of the Franciscan Francisco de Osuna (d. 1541) and she had as one of her spiritual directors St Peter of Alcantara (d. 1562), who wrote his own treatise *La oración y meditación*. Among the Dominicans, Luis de Granada (d. 1588) and Tomás de Vallgornera (d. 1665) are particularly important for bringing out the spiritual dimensions of the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas. We see perhaps the greatest attention to the liturgical foundations of spirituality among the Benedictines and Cistercians. In this respect, the works of Louis Blosius (d. 1566), Dom Augustine Baker (d. 1641), and Dominic Schram (d. 1641) continued to be influential well into the twentieth century. Of particular importance is Giovanni Bona (d. 1674), the cardinal whose *Manuductio ad coelum* and *De sacrifio missae* might be seen as the early modern precursors to Dom Prosper Guéranger and the Liturgical Movement. The *Introduction à la vie dévote* and *Traité de l'amour de Dieu* of St Francis de Sales (d. 1622) are masterpieces of spiritual literature, and the saint's correspondence with St Jane de Chantal (d. 1641) still has much of value. Other spiritual writers of special note include Bossuet and François Fénelon (d. 1715), whose influence is somewhat tainted by his association with Madame Guyon (d. 1717).

If the Spanish Carmelites can be seen as the great system builders in spiritual theology, the writers associated with the 'French school' are the creative writers of the age. The school can be traced to the *Règle de perfection* of the English convert and Capuchin Benet de Canfield (d. 1610), which stressed the importance of 'abstract' mysticism and abnegation of self. Benet influenced Madame Acarie (d. 1618), Pierre de Bérulle (d. (p. 575) 1629), and other important figures in this tradition. Cardinal Bérulle (d. 1629), who founded the Oratory in France, is the best-known figure of this school, and his spirituality of human 'states' (*etats*) of Christ can be seen as the fountainhead of much modern Christological and Mariological developments, not least of which are the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary developed by Jean-Jacques

Olier (d. 1657), the founder of the Sulpicians, St Jean Eudes (d. 1680), Blessed Louis Grignion de Montfort (d. 1716), and St Jean-Baptiste de la Salle (d. 1719), the founder of the Christian Brothers. The French School is also known for an especially mystical conception of the priesthood, which we see developed in the *L'Idée du sacerdoce et du sacifice* of Charles de Condren (d. 1641). Louis Chardon (d. 1651), and Vincent Contenson (d. 1674) are good examples of Dominicans who embraced aspects of the French School. Among the Franciscans we see the Capuchin Joseph du Tremblay (1638) and Louis-François d'Argentan (d. 1680). Among Jesuits we see Louis Lallement (d. 1635), who was to inspire the poetry of Jean-Joseph Surin (d. 1665) and the 'prayer from the heart' of Pierre de Caussade (d. 1751). It is a testament to his spirituality that Lallemant directed several of the future missioners of New France, including three of its greatest martyrs, St Isaac Jogues (d. 1646), St Antoine Daniel (d. 1648), and St Jean de Brébeuf (d. 1649).

Conclusion

It was natural for Newman, when he wished to understand the fathers—and indeed when he wished to understand himself—to read the great theologians of the early modern era. Newman the Anglican found his bearings by reading Bishop Bull, and Newman the Catholic charted a new course under the kindlier guidance of Dionysius Petavius. Antiquity remained his stronghold, and the Christendom of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries blazed in the mirror still. What Newman eschewed in his conversion was the Romantic rhetoric of decline and renewal. What he found was the *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* he so avidly charted in his own doctrine. We, as heirs to Newman's legacy, might take note of the cardinal's practice. If one eschews the rhetoric of decline and looks at early modern theology without privileging a particular theological genre or a particular religious order, one cannot but celebrate its positive influence on Roman Catholic theology today. We see the rise of the great traditions of Thomistic commentary with the Dominicans and Jesuits. We see the flowering of mystical theology in the Carmelites. We see the refined conception of the priesthood—and the devotion to the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary—of the French School. We see theologies of the predestination of Christ and Mary pioneered by the disciples of Blessed John Duns Scotus. We see works of controversy and interreligious dialogue that have never been equalled. If we celebrate the great lights of patristic and medieval theology, but fail to recognize their development in the early modern period, we risk tumbling off the shoulders of the giants on which we stand, and for this reason alone these theologians command our attention.

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Catholic Piety from Ruusbroec and the *Devotio Moderna* to the Legacy of Pierre de Bérulle

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines some of the main figures of Catholic piety from the Low Countries and France from the fourteenth to the early seventeenth centuries. The chapter begins with the mystical theology of Jan van Ruusbroec and then considers some of the figures associated with the Devotio Moderna. Later figures such as Francis de Sales and Pierre de Bérulle are then treated. Overall, the chapter chronicles the transition from a late-medieval exemplarist Christian spirituality to a more experiential variety of mysticism as we encounter it in the Modern Devotion and early-modern French spirituality. The chapter also notes ways in which these traditions were important for the later development of Catholic spirituality.

Keywords: spirituality, mysticism, mystical theology, Devotio Moderna, Jan van Ruusbroec, Francis de Sales, Pierre de Bérulle, exemplarism

Jan van Ruusbroec, the *Devotio Moderna*, and Their Influence

RELIGIOUS vernacular literature, including translations of books from the Bible, flourished earlier in Germanic countries than in countries in which Roman languages (more cognate to Latin) were prevalent (Van Oostrom 2006). In the early thirteenth century beguines such as Hadewijch (fl. 1300s) or Beatrice of Nazareth (*c*.1200–68) had developed a profound Christocentric spirituality written in Flemish or Middle Dutch texts. The most celebrated exponent of mystical theology in the Low Countries, however, is Jan van Ruusbroec (1293–1381). Through Latin and vernacular translations his writings exerted an influence throughout Europe. For the purposes of this chapter it may be noted that his best-known work, *The Spiritual Espousals,* was translated into French by Dom Beaucousin (in 1606), the spiritual director of the man who was later known as Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629). As we will see, there are more interesting connections between the

Flemish and Rhineland mystics, on the one hand, and the so-called French School of spirituality, on the other.

In what follows I outline Ruusbroec's key theological ideas as well as those of the later spiritual movement known as the *Devotio Moderna*. By the early sixteenth century the Modern Devotion was, as a spiritual movement, a thing of the past. I will examine the spirituality of French writers in the early seventeenth century, and attempt to trace some of the influences of the earlier Flemish and Dutch authors. In outlining these spiritual (p. 578) movements I will also point to the ways in which they influenced Catholic theology and spirituality in later centuries.

Jan van Ruusbroec

Jan van Ruusbroec wrote his most influential book, *Die Geestelike Brulocht* (*The Spiritual Espousals*) sometime in the 1340s, probably before 1343. Drawing on a rich medieval tradition (Augustinian, Ps-Dionysian, twelfth-century Cistercian, Bonaventurean, and beguine and Rhineland influences), Ruusbroec develops a highly original mystical theology of the Trinity, which is worth considering in some detail (Van Nieuwenhove 2003).

According to Ruusbroec the Father generates his Son from the fruitfulness of his paternal nature. From the mutual contemplation of the Father and his Word, the Holy Spirit proceeds as their bond of love. This is traditional medieval Augustinian theology. However, Ruusbroec introduces an important innovation. He argues that the Holy Spirit, as the bond of love between Father and Son, is the principle of the return of the divine Persons into their perichoretic unity, from which the whole dynamic process starts all over again. Ruusbroec therefore describes the Trinity as 'an ebbing, flowing sea' in which (a) the Son and the Holy Spirit go out from the Father, (b) they flow back into the divine unity, where (c) they rest in enjoyment or fruition. From here the movement starts again.

The three aspects I have identified here (going out, going in, and the fruitive moment of rest) are the foundation of Ruusbroec's spiritual ideal of the common life. To understand this I need to offer a few words about Ruusbroec's profound theological anthropology, which mirrors the Trinitarian movement already described. Ruusbroec describes two aspects of the unity of the human spirit. The so-called 'active unity' is the ground of the three faculties, memory, intellect, and will. This unity, however, is intimately linked with our eternal life in God as divine idea. The unity of the active unity (our created mind with the three faculties) with our eternal life in God is called the 'essential unity', which is indistinctly one with God's image. Clearly, this is an exemplarist anthropology: at the core of our being we are a relation, intimately linked to our eternal idea or image in God. It is here, 'in the most intimate and highest part of our being' that we receive the impress of our eternal image (*Brulocht*, b. 1630; trans. Wiseman 1985: 117). This is a natural nobility we have at the core of our being, and it makes us neither holy nor blessed but it is the foundation on which grace can operate so as to transform us (Van Nieuwenhove 2003: 101–110). Ruusbroec describes the union between our exemplarist existence as idea in the Word and our creaturely existence as follows:

> This eternal life which we eternally have and are in God apart from ourselves is a cause of our created being in time. Our created being depends upon this eternal being and is one with it in its essential subsistence. This eternal being and life which we have and are in God's eternal Wisdom is like God, for it both abides eternally and (p. 579) without distinction in the divine essence and, through the birth of the Son, flows forth eternally as a distinct entity
>
> (*Brulocht*, c.135–141; trans. Wiseman 1985: 149).

When this Neoplatonic, exemplarist perspective declines after Ruusbroec (for instance in the writings of Herp [1400–1478]) the union with God will gradually be interpreted in terms of a transient mystical experience. Ruusbroec's description, in contrast, is more ontological than psychological or phenomenological. For Ruusbroec, our created state participates in, and is founded upon, our eternal existence as idea in the Word. This explains his positive anthropology: our created being reaches out for fulfilment through a supernatural transformation aided by grace. For Ruusbroec, therefore, the exemplarist approach does not clash with an equally emphatic Christocentric approach: our transformation takes place by mirroring our life on that of Christ, the image of God who has become human.

I have elaborated Ruusbroec's anthropology for two reasons. First, because it is the foundation of his spiritual ideal of the common life (*gehemeyne leven*). Ruusbroec distinguishes between three 'lives' or aspects of the mystical journey: the active life, which refers, for him, to both life as a charitable activity as well as the practice of mastering our passions; an interior or God-yearning life; and a contemplative or superessential life. (Ruusbroec adopts the Ps-Dionysian term 'superessential' because this life perfectly reflects, and participates in, our archetypal existence as idea in the Word.) His spiritual ideal, then, is the common (or universal) life, i.e. a life which combines virtuous 'out-going' activity, more interior and devout 'in-going' practices, with the fruitive aspect of contemplation—thus mirroring the three-fold aspect of the intra-Trinitarian movement. It is important to note that, for Ruusbroec, the contemplative life is not the highest. Rather, he espouses a rather radical version of Gregory the Great's *vita mixta*, in which charitable activity and a contemplative disposition are in deep harmony with one another.

The second reason why I dwelt on Ruusbroec's theological anthropology is to illustrate its positive evaluation of the human person in her created state, and his insistence that our natural created state is already attuned to supernatural transformation. In this, Ruusbroec (writing before the split between the realms of nature and the supernatural) expresses a stance which has found renewed favour with modern theologians (e.g. Van Beeck 1993: 246–257). Ruusbroec's positive evaluation of the human person even extends to his views on justification. He emphatically affirms the universality of God's saving will, and he makes few, if any, references to Augustinian views on predestination. While affirming the necessity of grace for our salvation his views on the harmonious cooperation of God's universal grace and the human will are much closer to the Eastern view of *synergeia* (or cooperation) (perhaps via John Cassian's *Conference* XIII, 12) than to tradition-

al Augustinian views (Van Nieuwenhove 2003: 158–160). This optimistic theological anthropology will be adopted by most of the Flemish authors who have been influenced by him and is also shared by Francis de Sales.

(p. 580) As one of the last authors in the medieval period who develops a spirituality which is also profoundly theological, Ruusbroec links the Neoplatonic heritage with the central mysteries of Christ. This aspect of this theology was not always sufficiently appreciated by his critics. The influential chancellor of the Parisian university, Jean Gerson (1363–1429), for instance, took issue with the third book of *The Spiritual Espousals*, in which Ruusbroec describes our indistinct participation in the life of the Trinity. Despite Gerson's misgivings, expressed in a number of *Letters* (McGuire 1998: 202–210; 249–256; Schepers 2004: 64–85) Ruusbroec's work proved influential in France as well as in the rest of Europe. *The Spiritual Espousals* was first translated into Latin by Willem Jordaens (between 1353 and 1365), and printed in 1512 with a prefatory letter by Jacque Lefèvre d'Etaples (1455–1536). Other translations into Latin were made (sometime in 1375–1383) by Geert Grote, the founder of the *Devotio Moderna,* and by Laurentius Surius, a Carthusian from Cologne, who translated Ruusbroec's *Opera Omnia* in 1552. Through Surius's translation, Ruusbroec's theology was disseminated throughout Europe. As mentioned earlier, Dom Beaucousin produced a French translation of *The Spiritual Espousals* in 1606.

The Modern Devotion

The Modern Devotion was a late medieval movement characterized generally by a practical-ascetic spirituality. It was founded mainly by laypeople who established religious houses in the Low Countries and Germany to assist small communities in their quest for apostolic renewal. It is widely accepted that Geert Grote (1340–84), its main founder, visited Ruusbroec (whose works he recommended to his own community), in his monastery in Groenendael in 1377. Nevertheless, the character of the spiritual movement he promoted, the *Devotio Moderna* (best translated as 'the present-day devotion' according to Van Engen (2008)), was rather different from Ruusbroec's mystical theology. Grote shuns the Trinitarian and Neoplatonic aspects of Ruusbroec's theology. His spirituality avoids all speculative elements, and instead advances a moral-ascetical imitation of Christ's life and passion. This different perspective partly reflects his own life story. In 1374, at the age of thirty-four, Geert Grote abandoned the pursuit of a worldly career. He wrote a short document of 'resolutions and intentions, but not vows' (Grote 1988: 65–75) in which he recommends the study of Scriptures and a number of Church Fathers (not the scholastics). He converted his house in Deventer into a hospice for elderly women. After a retreat in a Carthusian house he became deacon and preached in the diocese of Utrecht and surrounds, until he died of the plague in 1384.

Grote's written output was limited enough in significance (some letters and sermons). More important were the writings of Thomas à Kempis (d. 1471), Florens Radewijns (d. 1398), and Gerhard Zerbolt van Zutphen (d. 1398). Thomas à Kempis was a canon regular near Zwolle and author of *The Imitation of Christ*, the most influential book of the *Devotio*

Moderna. As the title suggests, the book is Christocentric in inspiration and admonishes the reader to a total surrender of the will to Christ through humility, patience, (p. 581) self-examination, renunciation of selfishness, and contrition of heart. Other major representatives of the movement, such as Radewijns (in his *Tractatulus Devotus*) and Gerhard Zerbolt adopt the same approach. They also put a strong emphasis on meditative practices. Gerhard Zerbolt van Zutphen wrote two influential treatises (*The Manual of Reform of the Soul* and *The Spiritual Ascensions*. For a translation of the latter see Van Engen 1988: 243–315) in which meditation on the transience of life, the punishments of hell, as well as the goodness of God and the life of Christ are of paramount importance. The imagination plays an important role in these meditative practices: the reader should imagine herself to be part of a scene of the life of Christ. Gerhard Zerbolt defines meditation as 'the means by which you studiously turn over in your heart what you have read or heard and thereby stir up your affections or illuminate your intellect' (Van Engen trans. 1988: 288). While meditation is aimed at growing in conformity with Christ, it is conspicuous that descriptions of mystical union with God do not figure in the writings of the major representatives of the *Devotio Moderna*. In short, the most influential exponents of the *Devotio Moderna* emphasize the ascetical element of Ruusbroec's writings but abandon the speculative-theological, allegorical, and Trinitarian perspectives that are at the heart of Ruusbroec's theological vision. Scholars have often argued that the practical-ascetical dimension reflects the urban middle-class and secular nature of the Brethren of the Common Life (as they were called at the time, perhaps echoing Ruusbroec's ideal of the common life) but this claim needs to be qualified.

The important research by John van Engen (2008) has made clear that the Modern Devotion assumed diverse (semi-)institutional forms, arguing that it is too simplistic to characterize it as a lay movement. The Sisters of the Common Life can indeed be seen as a continuation of earlier medieval lay movements (such as the beguines, although the Sisters, in contrast to the beguines, did not own individual property. The beguines flourished mainly in the thirteenth century in the Low Countries and Germany. The movement consisted of women who lived a religious life without taking formal vows). The Brothers of the Common Life consisted of laymen and clerics living a communal life, usually of about fifteen men. Episcopal approval was essential for their survival. Another form in which the devout communities flourished was as Franciscan tertiaries, or as proper religious orders, such as Augustinian canons and canonesses, or Cistercians. The most renowned foundation of canons regular was Windesheim, which incorporated Ruusbroec's Groenendael a couple of decades after his death (in 1412). Most of the Brothers and Sisters eventually joined religious orders.

This more complex picture, for which Van Engen has sketched the historical and institutional background, allows us to situate a number of texts which do not fit the standard description of the Modern Devotion (as merely moral, ascetical, and anti-speculative). It is in light of this broader understanding of the Modern Devotion that we can situate a rich theological text such as the anonymous *Exposition on the Song of Songs* (*Bedudinghe op Cantica Canticorum*), written in the early fifteenth century and inspired by a Franciscan commentary (*Glossa Tripartita super Cantica*) written a century earlier. The *Exposition*,

which is profoundly allegorical, ecclesiological, and moral, abundantly draws on classic sources such as St Bernard, St Gregory, Augustine, as well (p. 582) as on Thomas Gallus (Schepers 2008: 87–102). Again, this more multifarious understanding of the *Devotio Moderna* allows us to situate Hendrik Herp (1400–1477), to be discussed shortly. Herp's oeuvre is one of the most important channels through which Ruusbroec's ideas found dissemination throughout Europe.

Hendrik Herp (Harphius), probably born in Northern Brabant, was first attached to the Brethren of the Common Life in Holland before he became a Franciscan. He died in Mechelen in 1477. His most important work—the only one he wrote in Dutch—is his *Mirror of Perfection* (*Spieghel der Volcomenheit*), written sometime in the 1440s and printed in 1475, and again in 1501. Publications in Latin (1509), French (1549 and 1605), Italian (1522), Portugese (1533), and Spanish (1551) followed during the sixteenth century (Gullik and de Veghel 1969). In 1538 all major works of Herp were published in Latin with the title *Theologia Mystica.* The work proved extremely influential and went through a number of reprints (1545 and 1556). In 1586 a 'corrected' version appeared in Rome. This corrected edition qualifies Herp's claims about the possibility of the vision of God in this life—exactly the concern that Gerson had raised about Ruusbroec's third book of *The Spiritual Espousals*—and replaces the Ruusbroecian language of the 'superessential' (*superessentialis*) life with 'supra-eminent' (*supereminens*) life. In his work Herp draws on many sources but the main ones are Ruusbroec, and Franciscan (Bonaventure and Hugh of Balma) (Gullik and de Veghel 1969). *The Mirror of Perfection* is divided into four parts. The first part is introductory, and deals with the mortifications that are necessary for embarking on spiritual transformation. The second, third, and fourth parts discusses the active, the contemplative, and the superessential lives respectively. For Herp, following Ruusbroec, the human soul mirrors the intra-Trinitarian dynamics: 'The most supreme part of the soul, in which the three faculties are united, and from which they flow as rays from the sun, and in which they flow back, is called mind. This is the central point of the soul, in which the image of the Trinity has been printed' (*Spieghel*, ch. 50). The Trinitarian Persons draw the faculties into their unity: the Holy Spirit operates on the will. (Herp's word for the operations of the Holy Spirit is *inwerken* (lit: 'in-workings'), which translators put in Latin as 'inactiones'. As we will see later, French writers will adopt this terminology literally, and talk of the 'in-action' of God on the soul, which, in French, is curiously misleading to denote the operation of God.) The Son, then, acts on the intellect, and the Father acts on the memory: 'Thus our spirit becomes drawn into the spirit of God, and there it is being melted. Thus it flows into the immeasurable abyss, in which it is constantly being renewed and blissfully born …' (*Spieghel*, ch. 63–65. For an English translation of the fourth part of Herp's *Spieghel*, see Van Nieuwenhove et al. 2008: 144–164; here 164). Herp describes in affective language how the soul is transported into God's love beyond all distinction. One of the necessary conditions for this superessential union with God is a loving inherence of, and adherence to, God (*een minlic inhanghen ende aencleven aen God*), which is fruition of God (*Spieghel*, ch. 61; Van Nieuwenhove et al. 2008: 154). Again, French spiritual writers will adopt this Ruusbroecian/Herpian language of adhesion.

Other notable aspects of Herp's theology are: the view that the hypostatic union meets the orientation of human nature towards fulfilment, and that the Incarnation therefore (p. 583) would have taken place even if the Fall had not occurred (Cognet 1966: 296). Again, in Christ there is unity of personhood in the divine Word, so that all actions of Christ are actions of God. Using a metaphor which Bérulle was to adopt, Herp writes that the human nature was grafted onto the divine nature (Cognet 1966: 27).

Herp's spirituality is undoubtedly more affective than that of Ruusbroec. While deeply influenced by Ruusbroec he nevertheless eliminates the strong exemplarist elements from his thought. Also, while Ruusbroec's mystical theology finds its fulfilment in the common life—a term that Herp, significantly, does not adopt—in which charitable activity and contemplation are in perfect harmony with one another, Herp's ideal is that of the supereessential life, which in Ruusbroec's view was only one facet of the common life. These differences in approach will result in describing mystical union more in terms of transient experience rather than as the supreme ideal of the Christian life. The more affective character of Herp's spirituality can also be illustrated by the role he attributes to prayerful ejaculations (compare *Spieghel*, ch. 32: *toegeesten*; Lat. *aspirationes et eiaculationes*), an aspect that may have inspired Francis de Sales (Cognet 1966: 306). As we noted earlier, Herp's writings were translated into many European languages, and exerted a very considerable influence, including on the French and Spanish schools of spirituality. Francisco de Osuna, Alonso de Madrid, Bernardo de Laredo, amongst others, incorporated Herp's ideas into their work (Gullik and de Veghel 1969).

The Evangelical Pearl

The major French authors of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries draw on a wide range of sources, including Spanish, as well as Flemish and Rhineland sources. Geert Grote's influence appears to be limited. The influence of Ruusbroec was more significant but was at times indirect. As we noted, Herp's oeuvre was of special significance in mediating his thought. The other channel was *The Evangelical Pearl*, an anonymous book published in Paris in 1602 entitled *La Perle Évangélique*. Now almost forgotten outside a select group of scholars, *The Evangelical Pear*l had originally been written in Dutch by a female spiritual writer of the early sixteenth century and was published in 1538 as *Die Groote Evangelische Peerle* (McGinn 2008). The French translation by the Carthusian Richard Beaucousin was based on a Latin edition (dating from 1545). The work incorporates many key themes of the Flemish school of spirituality and through the Latin and French translations it exerted a profound influence on the so-called 'French School' of spirituality, which flowers in the contributions of Cardinal de Bérulle, Francis de Sales (who recommended the book in one of his letters [McGinn 2008: 99]), Vincent de Paul, and others (Huijben 1930: 5–26).

The Evangelical Pearl adopts the Ruusbroecian anthropology (I, 5–6; I, 46; II, 8) and puts a distinct emphasis on how the three divine Persons transform the faculties. In Part II, ch. 41 (I use the chapter divisions of Vidal 1997) the author describes how the soul, having

discarded all images, becomes transformed and, consumed in love, gazes ‘into the imageless bareness of the divine nature’:

(p. 584)

> The memory, which is there united with the Father, is exalted in imageless bareness in divine fruition. The understanding, which is united with the Son, becomes simple, exalted in radiant truth in the mutual knowledge of God. The will, which is there united with the Holy Spirit, is freed of itself and exalted in divine freedom …
>
> (Schepers 2008: 281).

The theme of nothingness runs throughout the book *(Pearl.* I, 40). The following passage, which echoes Meister Eckhart’s *Predigt* 52, illustrates this:

> We will consider ourselves as a nothingness (D. *niet*; Fr. *néant*), as somebody who has nothing, can do nothing, knows nothing, and achieves nothing: for it is in this nothingness that our salvation is to be found. … And if I want to attain this noble nothingness and become nothing, it is necessary that the nothingness that is my soul becomes nothing with the nothingness that is God. For God is not like anything we can say about him in words’
>
> (Vidal 1997: 303–304; 291–292).

The Dutch author uses a number of different words to describe the process of annihilation and stripping bare the soul. One of them is *ghelatenheyt* (Vidal 1997: 304), translated as *résignation* in French. But, as Bernard McGinn (2008: 110) has noted, she also uses the term *afghescheydenheit*, which has a strong Eckhartian ring to it, and which the French version translates as *abstraction*. It seems a fair assumption that this language of *anéantissement* (Vidal 1997: 297), *annihilation* (Vidal 1997: 298), and *abstraction* (Vidal 1997: 243; 528) influenced French spiritual authors of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Before examining this, I need to make a final remark.

The spirituality of *The Evangelical Pearl* is not an ‘abstract spirituality’ which disregards the Incarnation and the sacramental life of the Church. Indeed, the Christocentric emphasis blends with language of annihilation and imagelessness. Through the annihilation which takes place in our spirit, soul, and body, we can clothe ourselves in Christ. The merits of Christ’s humanity enable us to enter into his divinity, for Christ’s soul, from the moment of his conception, had been incessantly turned towards the divinity (*Pearl* I, 43). Thus, the author of *The Evangelical Pearl* holds the abstract and incarnational aspects of Christian spirituality in a delicate balance. Annihilation can only be understood as a participation in the suffering of Christ (for example see *Pearl* I, 4; I, 16; I, 36; I, 43; I, 48; II, 47, and so on). Later French authors, too, would struggle with this tension.

The French Spiritual Writers of the Early Seventeenth Century

The intellectual and religious climate of the early seventeenth century was very different from that a hundred years earlier in the Low Countries. The Reformation and (p. 585) the Renaissance had left deep scars on the Catholic Church, which was still struggling to implement the reform measures of the Council of Trent. The spiritual movement around St Ignatius of Loyola (d. 1556), and later the discalced Carmelites (St Teresa of Avila (d. 1582) and St John of the Cross (d. 1591) began to make itself felt outside Spain. Nonetheless, the writings of the authors we discussed continued to influence spiritual authors, especially in France and Spain.

Benoît de Canfield

This influence is especially evident in the writings of Benoît de Canfield's *Rule of Perfection* (Mommaers 1971; Emery 1987: 17ff). This work is pervaded with some of the key terms (in Latin or French translation) of the Flemish mystics (such as *inaction de Dieu; abstraction; l'amour fruitif* and *l'amour pratique; l'oisiveté; annihilation; l'âme liquéfieé; anéantissement; dénudation de l'esprit*).

Canfield was born in 1562 (as William Fitch) in Essex. He converted to Catholicism in 1585 and went to Paris where two years later he joined the Capuchins. It is here that Canfield became familiar with the writings of the mystics of the Low Countries, such as Ruusbroec, Herp, and *The Evangelical Pearl*, as well as medieval Franciscan writings (especially Bonaventure), and Catherine of Genoa. He continued his studies in Venice, where he may have embarked on writing his *Règle de Perfection* (*Rule of Perfection*). While back in France he was introduced to the select circle surrounding Madame Acarie (d. 1618), which included Pierre de Bérulle, Dom Richard Beaucousin, and others. He died in 1611 (Emery 1987: 11–21).

Canfield is deeply influenced by, and explicitly refers to, Herp, as well as to a number of standard authors (Ps-Dionysius, St Bonaventure) and authors who are less known today, such as Rudolph of Biberach and Hugh of Balma. His main inspiration is, however, Ruusbroec (Emery 1987: 61).

The *Rule* is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the active life. In the active life we need to conform to what Canfield calls the 'exterior' will of God; that is, the will of God as it is known to us through law and reason (*Rule*, I, 5). The contemplative life concerns the 'interior' will of God: here we become more receptive to interior inspirations and drawings of God (*Rule*, II, 1). Following Ruusbroec (compare Van Nieuwenhove 2003: 63–66; 170–174) Canfield emphasizes the importance of 'purity of intention' (*Rule*, II, 2) or theocentric focus in the contemplative life. The third part is called the supereminent life, which concerns the 'essential' will of God. Here Canfield adopts the (corrected) terminology of Herp in speaking of the supereminent life instead of the superessential life. Canfield describes this will as 'purely spirit and life, totally abstract, pure in itself, and

stripped bare of all forms and images of created things, corporeal or spiritual, temporal or eternal' (*Rule*, III, 1; Emery, 1987: 176).

Scholars have emphasized that Part III of the *Rule* circulated first in a version that Canfield later disowned. Towards the end of his life he published the full *Rule*, in three parts, with important additions. The initial version (Tronc and Tronc 2009) was (p. 586) undoubtedly more Ps-Dionysian and less Christocentric than the later version. This does not mean, however, that we may assume that the two approaches were in tension with one another, and signal an evolution in his thinking, or even that Canfield was somehow pressurized into incorporating more Christocentric passages into his final version (Emery 1987: 25). After all, Canfield's own sources (Ruusbroec, *Pearl*, Herp) managed to keep in balance the approaches that stressed the role of imagelessness and 'abstraction' on the one hand, and the Christocentric focus on the other.

Like his Flemish precursors, Canfield describes how the faculties of the soul are drawn by God into the naked divine essence. Following *The Evangelical Pearl* and Herp, Canfield argues that annihilation must precede union with God (*Rule*, I, 2.7; Emery 1987: 100). And by distinguishing between active and passive annihilation, and working and fruitive love respectively (*Rule*, III, 14) Canfield recovers Ruusbroec's ideal of the common life, in which activity and fruition are in perfect harmony with one another:

> Thus, going out without going out, working without working … one makes a working love an enjoying love, the active life a contemplative life and he enjoys God as much, according to naked faith, in working and activity as he does in repose and idleness. This is the summit and height of perfection
>
> (*Rule*, III, 14; Emery 1987: 218).

There is, however, a very significant difference. While Ruusbroec had grounded his ideal of the common life in the intra-Trinitarian dynamics, mirroring the processions of the divine Persons, this dimension is absent from Canfield's *Rule*. None of the French authors who read him were to recover it. To these we now turn. We will mainly discuss Francis de Sales (1567–1622) and Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629), while briefly mentioning Jean Olier, St Jean Eudes, and St Vincent de Paul (1581–1660).

Francis de Sales

Love of God lies at the heart of Francis de Sales's writings and spiritual direction (Buckley 1989: 32). The opening sentences of his first bestselling work *Introduction à la vie dévote,* published in 1609, illustrate this by defining devotion in terms of love of God:

> True and living devotion, O Philothea, presupposes the love of God; nay rather it is no other thing than a true love of God; yet not any kind of love; for, in so far as divine love beautifies our souls, and makes us pleasing to his divine Majesty, it is called grace; in so far as it gives us strength to do good, it is called charity; but

> when it reaches such a degree of perfection, that it makes us not only do good, but do so carefully, frequently and readily, then it is called devotion
>
> (*Introduction* I, 1; De Sales 2006: 2).

The *Introduction* was written for a wide audience and it explicitly states that devotion is suited 'to all vocations and professions'. Indeed, it is 'an error, nay rather a heresy to wish (p. 587) to banish the devout life from the army, from the workshop, for the courts of princes, from the household of married folk' (*Introduction*, I, 3; De Sales, 2006: 7).

This broad understanding of devotion, to include ordinary laypeople, appears to hark back to Geert Grote's *Devotio Moderna*. Similarities do not end there. Indeed, the book, like the most celebrated exponents of the Modern Devotion, eschews all talk of mystical union. Moreover, it adopts the more meditative practices that we encountered in the writings of Radewijns and Gerhard Zerbolt van Zutphen. In his *Introduction* Francis de Sales admonishes us 'to represent to the imagination the scene of the mystery upon which the meditation is made, as though it were actually taking place in our presence' (*Introduction* II, 4; De Sales 2006: 56). For instance, if we wish to meditate upon Christ on the cross, we should imagine ourselves to be on Mount Calvary (*Introduction* II, 4; De Sales 2006: 56). The purpose of this discursive use of the imagination is to transform our affections towards God. Also one of the goals of the book is showing how we can withdraw into the solitude of our heart while we remain outwardly preoccupied with daily business (*Introduction,* II, 12)—a theme that echoes Ruusbroec and his school. The *Introduction* proved extremely popular and in 1616 translations in Latin, English, Italian, and German had already appeared (Cognet 1966: 276).

Through his encounters with Jeanne de Chantal from 1604 onwards, and owing to a growing Carmelite influence in France, Francis de Sales's writings gradually became more overtly mystical (Cognet 1966: 282ff). While he had initially expressed reservations about contemplative, non-conceptual prayer that does not use discursive imagination, he eventually espoused it wholeheartedly. This shift is reflected in his *Treatise on the Love of God* (*Traité de l'Amour de Dieu*), published in 1616. Francis de Sales retains his optimistic outlook on human nature. He speaks of the 'affinity' between God and the human person (*Treatise*, I, 15). Without downplaying the necessity of the role of grace in our deification, he claims that even after the Fall we retain 'the natural inclination to love God above all things' (*Treatise*, I, 15). Francis de Sales has no hesitation about affirming the universality of God's saving will (*Treatise*, II, 7), perhaps echoing some of the key intuitions of his Flemish precursors. Conformity with the will of God remains central (as it was for Canfield). Francis de Sales develops the theme of 'holy indifference' (*sainte indifférence*), which only seeks to conform to the will of God. Indeed, the 'indifferent' person would prefer hell to heaven if that were the will of God (*Treatise*, IX, 4). This call for radical submission to God was to become a key theme in other French writers, including, of course, Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675–1751). But the ways of attaining this goal have changed: in marked contrast to his earlier *Introduction* Francis de Sales is now at pains to distinguish meditation from contemplation (*Treatise*, VI, 3–6); he now also discusses holy re-

pose and recollection (*Treatise*, VI, 7–11); he describes the 'outflowing (*escoulement*) and liquefaction of the soul' into God, which he calls ecstasy (*Treatise*, VI, 12); and he pays considerable attention to rapture (*Treatise*, VII, 4–6). Nonetheless, this attractive work, which draws on both spiritual and scholastic authors, concludes by admonishing the reader to consider the Passion of Christ, for Mount Calvary, 'the mount of lovers', is 'the academy of love' (*Treatise*, XII, 13): 'All love that does not take its beginning from Our Saviour's Passion is frivolous and dangerous. Unhappy is death without the love of the Saviour, unhappy is love without the death of the Saviour' (*Treatise*, XII, (p. 588) 13; De Sales 1997: 554). While Francis de Sales's writings remained popular he did not attract a major following. The main founder of the 'French School of spirituality' (a label we adopt for scholarly convenience rather than because of its distinctive and cohesive nature; see Krumenacker 1999: 15–43) is Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle. Ironically, his writings did not initially have much impact. But as a founder of the Oratory his influence proved ultimately more substantial and pervasive.

Pierre de Bérulle

Pierre de Bérulle was born near Troyes in 1575. At the age of twenty-two he wrote, at the instigation of Dom Beaucousin, his spiritual director, a treatise entitled *Bref Discours de l'Abnégation Intérieure,* in which we can discern the influence of the Flemish and Rhineland mystics, as well as Catherine of Genoa. The main inspiration of the work, however, came from an Italian treatise written by Isabella Bellinzaga in the 1580s. After studying for the priesthood in the Sorbonne he was ordained in 1599 (Moliens 1936: 1539). Bérulle was instrumental in establishing Carmelite houses in France. He is mainly remembered, however, for the foundation of the Oratory, which aimed to reform the Catholic Church by instilling a profound spirituality in its priests: sanctification, not disciplinary reform measures, was the aim of the Oratory (Krumenacker 1999: 136). This explains why Bérulle had such a lofty view of the priesthood and saw it as intimately linked with the priesthood of Christ. In 1611 Bérulle, with five fellow priests, began living together as a small community. The similarity with some of the communities of the Modern Devotion was not lost on at least some of seventeenth-century commentators in Holland, such as Jacques de la Torre (Frijhoff 1988: 193). The Oratory of Jesus was recognized by papal bull in 1613. Its aim is to instruct both priests and those who aspire to join the priesthood. When Bérulle, as one of the superiors of the Carmelites in France, attempted to impose a vow of servitude to the Virgin Mary on the Carmelite nuns, opposition flared up. The quarrel grew out of proportion but it deserves to be mentioned for it is in light of it that we can begin to understand Bérulle's most important work, the *Discours de l'État et des Grandeurs de Jésus*, published in 1623. His last years were marred by more trials, such as opposition from the Jesuits (partly inspired by pragmatic concerns, namely the growing attraction of the Oratory's foundations as competing centres of learning), and ongoing quarrels with some of the Carmelites. On 2 October 1629, Bérulle collapsed while celebrating Mass and died (Krumenacker 1999: 125–157).

It is difficult to indicate Bérulle's sources: he has been influenced by a whole range of authors, including the Flemish and Rhineland mystics, the Spanish mystics (he read Teresa of Avila's writings fervently), as well as the French authors of his day, including Francis de Sales. We have already mentioned the possible influence of Herp on Bérulle. Scholars (Huijben 1930: 428–473) have claimed that Bérulle was especially influenced by *The Evangelical Pearl,* which had been published (under the auspices of Bérulle's spiritual director, Dom Beaucousin) in French in 1602. Indeed, Bérulle's shift from early (p. 589) theocentrism to radical Christocentrism, as well as the language of annihilation and adhesion to Christ could very well have been inspired by *The Evangelical Pearl*.

Bérulle is indeed (in the words of Pope Urban VIII) 'the apostle of the Incarnate Word'. But his profound Christological spirituality has a Trinitarian foundation. In order to illustrate this, I need to mention the manner in which Bérulle distinguishes three unities: the unity of the divine essence, the divinity; the unity of love, the Trinity; and the unity of subsistence, the Incarnation. The Son of God receives the unity of essence from the Father; with the Father the Son produces the unity of love, while he bestows (*communiquer*) the unity of subsistence to humanity through the will of the Father (*Grandeurs*, III, 8). The Holy Spirit is the end point of the loving emanations of the Father and the Son within the Trinity (*Grandeurs*, IV, 2). In this context Bérulle speaks of the 'sterility' of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. However, this intra-Trinitarian 'sterility' becomes an extra-Trinitarian fertility (*stérile en soi et fécund hors de soi-même*), which comes to fruition in the womb of the Virgin (*Grandeurs*, IV, 2). The Holy Spirit 'produces a God-man and bestows a new birth on the eternal Word in human nature' (*Grandeurs*, IV, 2). Thus, while he is the termination and resting place for the love of Father and Son within the Godhead, the Holy Spirit freely distributes the fruitfulness of God outside God. Similarly, Jesus is the termination of divine love operating outside the Godhead, 'pouring forth outside of himself, into his creatures the fecundity of his Spirit in the order of grace and glory' (*Grandeurs*, IV, 2; Thompson 1989: 134). Through the Incarnation, God's activity reaches full circle. Alluding to the patristic idea of recapitulation (but perhaps also indebted to Herp—see Cognet 1966: 335) Bérulle writes that 'the first activity of God is the generation of his Word, and the final activity of God is the incorporation of this same Word in human nature' (*Grandeurs*, IV, 10). Through the Incarnation all things can return to their origin, God (*Grandeurs*, IV, 10). At the heart of Bérulle's spirituality is Christ. Bérulle uses the theology of the hypostatic union (and the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature) to develop a spirituality that stresses how Christ is the sacrament which renders God present to us (*Grandeurs*, IV, 6). The annihilation (*l'anéantissement*) of the divine Word in becoming human leads to a sacramental understanding of Christ, in which human nature becomes deified and in which the Word acts in a way that is divinely human and humanly divine (*Grandeurs*, II, 8). Moreover, the absence of a human person in Christ is interpreted by Bérulle as an archetypal state of abnegation and kenosis. The grandeur of the Son is based on renunciation and self-emptying, and as Christians we should mirror this renunciation (Cognet 1966: 356). Adopting an image we encountered in Herp, Bérulle writes that God 'substituted the heavenly graft, the divine subsistence, the very person of his Son in place of the human subsistence' (*Grandeurs*, II, 10; Thompson, 1989: 122). Hence-

forth, the eternal Word is 'the proprietor of all the actions and sufferings [of the human nature]. He sustains them, elevates them, deifies them in his own person, by sustaining, elevating and deifying the substance of this humanity …' (*Grandeurs*, II, 10; Thompson, 1989: 124). The 'ontological and existential disposition' (McCosker 2006: 119) Jesus enjoys as Incarnate Word—Bérulle usually speaks of *état*—can be shared by us because the order of the hypostatic union is (p. 590) permanent (McCosker 2006: 121–123) as it participates in God's eternity (*Grandeurs*, IV, 7–9). It is our calling to mirror this dénouement, and 'become a naked receptivity (*une nue capacité*) and a pure emptiness (*un pur vide*) in myself, filled with him and not myself, for all times' (*Grandeurs*, II, 12). Again, as Jesus worships (*adorer*) the supreme unity of the divine essence through his human nature, so too, we should worship and adore God. It is clear that Bérulle has adopted the language of denudation and annihilation of the other spiritual schools but he gives it a radical Christocentric twist. Although not entirely original this specific emphasis on the eternal relationality of the Son towards the Father within the Trinity, and the ensuing kenosis of the Word within the Incarnation (*Grandeurs*, III, 8) proved an important legacy of Bérulle, and clearly influenced twentieth-century theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–88):

> The only Son of God continually refers all that he is to his Father. His being and his life consist in this relationship. Even strictly speaking, his life is nothing but a life that substantially and personally refers all that he is to his sole source. In the same way our being and our life should be totally dedicated to a perfect and absolute referral of all that we are …
>
> (*Grandeurs*, V, 9; Thompson, 1989: 137).

Thus the Son wants to transform his own 'natural filiation' into a living source of adoptive filiation (*Grandeurs*, V, 9).

Bérulle's attachment to the vows of servitude (Howells, 2009: 232–233) must be understood in light of this kenotic theology (which acknowledges both our own nothingness as sinful beings and the grandeur of the Incarnation). As he puts it in *Grandeurs*, II, 6:

> Contemplating and thinking of your grandeurs I offer and present myself to you in the humble, blessed state and condition of servitude. I propose and make a constant, certain and inviolable promise of perpetual servitude to you, O Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God, my life and my Saviour. It is an offer of servitude to you, to your sacred, deified humanity and to your humanised divinity
>
> (Thompson, 1989: 121).

Three more aspects deserve mention in passing. First, Bérulle inaugurates devotion towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus in his writings (Molien, 1936: 1557–1559)—an aspect of his thought which St Jean Eudes was to develop in greater detail. Second, Bérulle contributed to a strong Eucharistic piety which flourished in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France. Bérulle describes the Eucharist as one of the central mysteries of the Christian faith, together with the Trinity and the Incarnation. In each of these central

mysteries the Son lives (present tense) in three distinct states: in the bosom of the Father as Son of God; in our humanity as God-man, and in the Eucharistic bread and wine as offering (*Grandeurs*, VII, 3). Bérulle beautifully describes how the Eucharist extends the mystery of the Incarnation to all the faithful, just as the Incarnation itself reflects and extends the divine self-gift at the heart of the Trinity (*Grandeurs*, VII, 3). Third: the priesthood occupies a privileged role in Bérulle's spirituality and in the reform of the (p. 591) Church as he envisaged it (Morgain, 2007: 139–152). The priest mirrors the mediating role of Christ and therefore assists in the transmission of the sanctity of Christ. In a letter written to a priest of the Oratory, Bérulle writes: 'the church is divided into two parts and both of them are holy, if we consider its institution and origin. One is the people, and the other is the clergy. One receives holiness, and the other brings it about.' (Thompson 1989: 183). In a post-Vatican II era these words may appear strangely out of fashion. We should remember, however, that Bérulle's lofty views on the priesthood should never be read in separation from his kenotic Christology. In developing such an elevated view of the priesthood Bérulle was not downplaying the role of the laity but rather attempting to awaken his priests to the full reality of their calling, which is one of humble and devout service to God and his people.

Bérulle has no interest in mystical union. For him, the culmination of spirituality is union with the Word Incarnate whose hypostatic union reflects a divine kenosis. Traditional language of annihilation and abnegation obtains an utterly Christocentric hue and a Neoplatonic spirituality of imageless, indistinct union with God does not figure in his *Discours de l'État et des Grandeurs de Jésus.* Nonetheless, scholars are of the view that some key tenets of his Christology we discussed are inspired by *The Evangelical Pearl* and Herp. Still, Bérulle writes in a very different climate: while he attempts to jetison any lingering aspects of Neoplatonic spirituality, he succeeded in developing a profound Christian spirituality for the modern age.

Other French Spiritual Writers

Bérulle gradually exerted a considerable influence on the devotional life of France from the seventeenth century onwards. His influence stretches from Bossuet and Pascal, to Hans Urs von Balthasar in the twentieth century. Some of his immediate followers include the following. St Jean Eudes (1601–80) became a member of the Oratory in 1623. His teachers were Bérulle (until 1627) and Charles de Condren (d. 1641). Jean Eudes dedicated his life to missionary activity in France (mainly in Normandy, Brittany, Ile de France, and Burgundy), the assistance of victims of the plague in Argentan and Caen, as well as providing spiritual guidance. He left the Oratory and founded his own order, The Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudists) in 1643. The goal was to educate priests who lived in a community but did not take vows—an approach that is reminiscent of some forms of the Modern Devotion. Jean Eudes is mainly remembered for his spirituality of the sacred heart of Jesus Christ—a theme we have already encountered in Bérulle. His liturgy of the sacred heart received papal approval in 1670. It left a profound mark on Catholic spirituality that continued well in the twentieth century. His main writings are *La Vie et le Royaume de Jésus dans les Âmes Chrétiennes* (*The Life and Kingdom of Jesus in Christian*

souls), published in 1637, and *La Dévotion au Très Saint Coeur et au Très Sacré Nom de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie* (*Devotion towards the Very Sacred Heart and the Very Sacred Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary*), which appeared in 1648, and which enjoyed many reprints (see Milcent 1974).

(p. 592) Jean-Jacques Olier (1608–57) is perhaps the author who most eloquently expounded Bérulle's spirituality. He too founded a seminary near the church of Saint Sulpice in Paris, with many daughter houses throughout France in the following years. The emphasis in the Society of Priests of St Sulpice was on pastoral and ministerial formation. Olier sees the priesthood mainly in terms of ministering the eucharistic sacrifice and mediating between God and his people. Indeed, he admonishes his fellow priests to become transformed and annihilated in the eucharistic sacrifice through a radical identification with the Host (*être convertie en hostie*). He wrote an influential *Christian Catechism for the Interior Life*, published in 1656, which was translated into Dutch, English, and Italian. (Noye and Dupuy 1981).

It is difficult to assess the claim that Bérulle may have influenced his friend St Vincent de Paul (1581–1660). Vincent de Paul's spirituality found expression in almost 30,000 letters but, unlike Bérulle, he did not write any systematic treatises. Moreover, St Vincent de Paul was also deeply influenced by other sources, such as St Frances de Sales's *Treatise on the Love of God,* Teresa of Avila's writings, as well as the *Rule of Perfection* by Canfield. St Vincent de Paul founded the Lazarists (papal approval was received in 1633) for secular priests. He also assisted Louise de Marillac (1591–1660) in establishing the Daughters of Charity.

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Catholic Theology and the Enlightenment (1670–1815)

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the Catholic Church's engagement with the Enlightenment from 1670–1815. It considers Catholic philosophies of the Enlightenment and new conceptualizations of natural law. The chapter also explores Catholic exegetical discussions during the period, showing how Enlightenment concerns enabled new styles of attention to the Scriptural text, new Patristic scholarship, and the origins of the later liturgical movement. Jansenist and Gallican theologies stimulated reflection on eccelesiology and the papacy, and a variety of thinkers developed new theologies of the state, and of the economy. This period also saw the rise of the Catholic ultramontanism that was to mark Church life until the Second Vatican Council.

Keywords: Catholic Church, Enlightenment, eclecticism, Tridentine reforms, natural law, Catholic theology, reform Catholicism, historical-critical exegesis, strong papacy, Ultramontanist ecclesiology

MUCH is written about Catholicism contending with modernity, but theologians have neglected the earliest phase of the Church's active engagement with new ideas, namely the period usually referred to as 'the Enlightenment'. Today, however, historians have established a plurality of Enlightenments. The smallest common denominator for all Enlightenment families was the ideal of conceptual clarity paired with critical judgement, but also important was battling dogmatism, prejudice, superstition, and enthusiasm (Sorkin 2008).

Catholic Enlightenment

The great majority of Catholic theologians and philosophers met Enlightenment reasoning with suspicion for two reasons: firstly, its criticism seemed to undermine the trustworthiness of revelation and Catholic tradition; and secondly, more importantly, it seemed to make reason a judge over truths of faith, ultimately marginalizing the latter. The most important thinker of the new era, Benedict Spinoza (1632–77), seemed to confirm these suspicions. His exclusion of the supernatural in exegesis as well as his persuasive monism

threatened to destroy the foundations of the Christian religion. In order to refute Spinozism, Catholic thinkers had to update their metaphysics and methods of theological inquiry. A hesitant reform process attempted to extract from modern thought whatever was useful for the defence of Catholic doctrine. In a sense, one can speak of Catholic Enlightenment whenever Catholic theologians constructively engaged with the intellectual challenges of the age, even in an apologetic manner. A constructive interaction does not (necessarily) entail the sacrifice of doctrinal truths to fashionable (p. 596) ideas. Rather, Catholic authors tried to understand their opponents and wrestled with their thoughts in as much of a hermeneutic generosity as one could expect from them, even if they utterly disagreed with these opponents. A good example for such a stance is Nicolas-Sylvestre Bergier (1715–90), who was admired by the *philosophes* for his purely argumentative style that avoided all polemics. He attempted to battle the Enlightenment critics of Catholic doctrine on their own ground by accepting as many of their presuppositions as possible. In the eighteenth century he became the strongest and most sophisticated voice of Catholic apologetics (Albertan-Coppola 2010). His *Deism Self-refuted* (1767) was among the best critiques of Rousseau, and became, like his *Certitude of the Proofs of Christianity* (1767), an international bestseller (Curran 2011). Of course not every Catholic Enlightener was as irenic as Bergier, but he can serve as a model for understanding what it means to be a Catholic engaging the Enlightenment. Given the variety of political and cultural contexts in which Catholics undertook such an engagement, there was no *unified* Catholic Enlightenment but rather a broad spectrum of Catholic Enlightenments that varied considerably in their acceptance of traditional Catholic theology.

This chapter focuses on the constructive interaction of Catholics with the Enlightenment and not on the schools of Baroque scholasticism that perceived Enlightenment thought as heretical innovation or even atheism (e.g. Hardouin 1733). Such a constructive interaction relied on the method of *eclecticism* and was inspired by the renewed spirit of the Tridentine reforms in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Catholics consulted the works of modern thinkers, reviewed them, and assessed to what degree they contained valuable insights that were compatible with the doctrinal tradition. This method had the critical advantage that it could easily update books to meet new challenges. Moreover, Catholic eclecticism demonstrated by its own method the self-confidence and critical judgement of the authors and the relative open-mindedness of the Church, but it lacked the coherence of a unitary system of thought that previous Catholic schools of philosophy had possessed and that would return only at the end of the nineteenth century in the form of neo-Thomism. Catholic misgivings about the Enlightenment were to become so strong that the papacy saw the newly created neo-Thomism as the only viable system to conduct Catholic theology and to address the intellectual problems of the time (Peitz 2006; McCool 1989). Indeed, a major problem of the Catholic Enlightenment was that it understood itself too much as an apologetic endeavour. This is understandable due to the heavy attacks from the radical Enlightenment’s monism (Spinoza; d’Holbach; etc.) and scepticism (Bayle), the more moderate Enlightenment propagated by Locke, Montesquieu, or even Voltaire, which undermined traditional Christian doctrines but retained belief in a providential deity, and the state governments that attempted to subjugate the Church (Is-

rael 2010; Sorkin 2008; Lehner & Printy 2010a; Lehner 2010b). The more Catholic thinkers attempted to modernize their defence of Catholicism, the more they neglected the core of theology, the person of Christ. The absence of any serious reinterpretations of Christology or soteriology (Buckley 1987) demonstrates this deficiency.

(p. 597) The works of many Catholic Enlighteners heavily influenced the Catholic Tübingen school and Anton Günther's Vienna school. Many of its core ideas were resuscitated in the early twentieth-century modernist crisis and the Reform Catholicism of the first half of the century: for example, historical-critical exegesis, the striving for a strong patristic basis of theology, a new ecclesiology, a reform of the liturgy, and the desire for a profound theological anthropology. Moreover, the systematic outline of theology textbooks and styles of argumentation, e.g. from Benedict Stattler's (1728–97) works, lived on in neo-scholastic textbooks well into the 1940s.

Catholic Philosophies of the Enlightenment and New Conceptualizations of Natural Law

Next to Giambattista Vico (1668–1744), the most original Catholic philosopher of the early Enlightenment was Nicholas Malebranche (1638–1715). In his *Search After Truth* (1674) he developed a theory of Occasionalism that attempted to answer the fundamental question of the relationship between body and soul. If there were a radical dualism between soul and body, as Descartes had stated, then it would be inconceivable how the mind can perceive and move bodies through volition. Malebranche's solution was that perception was not a real modification of the mind, and that volition was not efficacious. 'Instead, God presents to the mind the *idea* of the thing seen on the occasion of its being "seen", just as he moves bodies […] on the occasion of our "willing" ' (Riley 2000: 249). He does this, however, not through a constant miraculous intervention but through his 'general will'. The latter concept was also the cornerstone for Malebranche's conceptualization of a general divine providence that did not have to govern creation with the help of particular decrees and interventions in history. This theory 'saved' providence against radical deists, yet at the same time it minimized divine action in the world. Consequently, his theory of providence was invoked by Catholic Enlighteners who intended to defend the deposit of faith as well as by thinkers whose goal was the elimination of a personal God for the sake of an impersonal principle of creation. Nevertheless, Malebranche had always insisted that the ultimate goal of history and the purpose of nature was the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who elevates nature from a causally determined mechanism to a complex system with finality (Baur 2000). His philosophy reconstructed a systematic interdependence of faith and reason against scholasticism, which he regarded as anti-Christian (Pyle 2003; Nadler 2000). The Barnabite Cardinal Hyacinthe Gerdil (1718–1802) was an ardent follower of Malebranche and made efforts to reconcile modernity with Catholicism by introducing elements from contemporary philosophy into theology. He viewed natural laws as the effects of divine order and argued against any inherent movement and principles of (p. 598) life within matter itself. In his political philosophy he

claimed that political virtue requires religion as its basis because only religion can raise sufficient public commitment. Consequently his *Anti-Emile* (1763) abhorred Rousseau's idea of education without religion and his distrust in institutions. For the cardinal such institutions were necessary to keep human egoism in check (Borghero 2010b; Gerdil 2011).

In France leading Jesuits such as Claude G. Buffier (1661–1737) and Réné-Joseph Tournemine (1661–1739) went far beyond Gerdil and attempted to merge Locke, Newton, and Malebranche into a new synthesis. This new eclectic system was intended to provide an epistemological overhaul of Thomism. According to this synthesis even the idea of God could be said to have derived from sense perception, brought about by the ordination of providence. If the idea of God was derived from the senses, however, then it could be easily (and probably) distorted by them. This fit perfectly with the doctrine of original sin and the subsequent human failure to arrive at a flawless natural knowledge of God. Therefore, the French theologians (and later the Jesuit Wolffian Benedict Stattler), argued that a revelation was needed to instruct humans with infallible certainty about God's identity and plans. The new Jesuit synthesis made many theologians believe that they had found empirical proof for original sin and other Church doctrines. The denial or minimization of revelation by radical and moderate Enlighteners urged theologians to produce a new standard treatise on this very subject. Influenced by the French Jesuit synthesis, Joseph Hooke (1716–96), professor at the Sorbonne, conceived a new way of apologetic theology in his *Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion* (1752). Instead of emphasizing confessional truths, Hooke's main aim was to prove revelation as such. Like many of his contemporaries, he put moral arguments for the existence of God before physical and metaphysical arguments. He also developed a criteriology of revelation and presented a theory of miracles and prophecies—something new in Catholic apologetics (Heinz 1984: 163–171). Nevertheless, his high appreciation of natural religion and natural law, both of which he considered primordial revelation, led many of his critics to claim that he mingled the natural and the supernatural together. Moreover, Hooke's book was one of the boldest attempts to integrate Newtonian physics into Catholic theology, and thus to reconcile science and religion (O'Connor 1995). Only the censoring of Hooke's student Jean-Martin de Prades (1724–84), who had applied the above-mentioned Jesuit epistemology to his dissertation in 1751, brought the Jesuit experiment to a halt (Burson 2010). In Germany, the Benedictine Ulrich Weiss (1713–63) projected in his *On the Improvement of the Human Intellect* (1747) a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism (Lehner 2011: 191–193) that anticipated the Kantian project. At the end of the eighteenth century, it was also first and foremost Catholic philosophers who positively received the critical works of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). For the Benedictine Maternus Reuss (1751–98) Kant had shown that atheism could not be proven and that there was room for genuine faith. Thus, his philosophy was considered an authentically Christian one (Fischer 2005). One of the more original interpreters of Kant was the Salzburg Benedictine Ulrich Peutinger (1751–1817). In *Religion, Revelation and the Church Found in Pure Reason* (1795) he asserted that Kant's system was among (p. 599) the most important philosophical achievements of humanity because it had overcome scepticism and demonstrated the categories as the laws of human reasoning. Unlike Kant, however, Peutinger's starting point of reflection was *pure*

reason that precedes any differentiation into practical and theoretical parts; he was in this regard influenced by the works of the former Barnabite Leonhard Reinhold (1757–1823), one of the most impressive German idealists who had converted to Protestantism in 1783. Peutinger identified the unity of reason (as the ultimate structure of thinking) with God, wherefore all proofs for the existence of God must fail 'because God, for whose existence one seeks proof from principles, is himself the principle of all principles' (Lehner 2011: 201–203).

Benedict Stattler (1728–97) was an equally ingenious thinker and the most important German Catholic theologian of the eighteenth century. He reconstructed Catholic philosophy and theology with the mathematical method of Christian Wolff (1679–1754) (Gómez-Tutor 2004). His eclectic, empirical dogmatism, which navigated between Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, and Hume (Werner 1866: 173–177) and relied on a similar concept as the French Jesuit synthesis, claimed that clear principles and concepts would allow for clear explanations, convincing demonstrations, and proper, chain-like connections of all doctrines (Scholz 1957: 46–51). In his apologetic works, Stattler arranged his arguments according to the modalities of possibility, reality, and necessity. In *Loci Theologici* (1775) he even merged the authorities of the scholastic theologians, natural reason, philosophers, and history into a new category entitled 'reasonable theology'. For Stattler, theology became a scientific discipline that was not able to give insight into its object by showing its sufficient reasons, since only the rational parts of doctrine, not the mysteries themselves were reachable by reason. Theology thus became a science of the *naturally* certain elements of revelation. For mysteries, only their non-contradiction and thus the possibility of their existence could be demonstrated (Ruhstorfer 2003: 195). Such a methodology was a compromise—and Georg Hermes (1775–1831) would follow Stattler in this respect (Scholz 1957: 56–59). The impressive consequence with which Stattler connected all doctrines and the methodological outlines of his works remained an important influence for neo-scholastic textbooks of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Influenced by Stattler and other Catholic Enlighteners was also Bernard Bolzano (1781–1848), who was undoubtedly the most ingenious Catholic philosopher of the nineteenth century, especially due to his contributions to mathematics but also to his influence on the formation of phenomenology and analytic philosophy (Winter 1969).

Rationalistic tendencies notwithstanding, mystical theology also influenced Catholic philosophy during this era. Fenelon's (1651–1715) idea of 'disinterested love' led not only to the establishment of interconfessional networks of mystical theologians and thus to more religious tolerance, but also to the appreciation of disinterest as a moral value. His disinterested love of one's neighbour even foreshadowed the natural law morality of later generations and especially Kant's moral theory (Force 2003: 169–204). Fenelon's most important disciple was the convert Andrew Michael Ramsay (1686–1743). In his thinking Ramsay combined his master with Malebranche and Bayle and advocated in (p. 600) his best-selling book, *A New Cyropaedia or the Travels of Cyrus* (1728), a universalist conception of Christianity. In his *Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion* (1748) he took up Matthew Tindal's famous charge and argued with the help of an ingenious universalism and syncretism that Christianity *was* as old as the creation. His thoughts became

of great importance for Hume, Coleridge, and Jonathan Edwards, but were undeservedly forgotten by his Catholic peers (Eckert 2009). Like Ramsay, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803) was also influenced by Fenelon's thought, but he argued instead for a distinctly heterodox theosophy and esotericism. Together with Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821) he also contributed to a conservative political theology in the aftermath of the French Revolution (Armenteros 2011). Also heterodox was the work of the Benedictine Léger Marie Deschamps (1716–74), who constructed a radically anti-supernatural system of philosophy that he described as 'enlightened atheism' (Puisais: 2001).

The eighteenth-century reconceptualization of natural law, which abandoned a teleological understanding of nature for the sake of a mechanistic and utilitarian one, and its desacralization, which made the welfare of the state the guiding principle and bestowed on the sovereign the supreme power over the Church (*jus circa sacra*), were an enormous challenge for theology. According to such thought other religious denominations could no longer be considered threats and had to be tolerated for the sake of political stability and prosperity. For the Austrian canonist Valentin Eybl (1741–1805), natural law stood even higher than any positive ecclesiastical law and functioned as the ultimate key to how one interprets revelation (Fritsch 2004; Fritsch 2007). In Italy, the Jansenist theologian Pietro Tamburini (1737–1827) wrote *On Ecclesiastical and Civil Tolerance* (1783), a highly skilled analysis of the concept of tolerance, distinguishing between philosophical, religious, and theological tolerance. However, he did not regard atheism as tolerable (Davidson 2000). More outspoken than Tamburini was Giovanni C. Amaduzzi (1740–92), who in 1778 projected a Christian political philosophy that not only requested the reinforcement of the social contract, the abolition of feudal rights, and an end to slavery, but also a society that was based on the natural rights of man (Rosa 2010: 239). Cesare Beccaria (1738–94) demanded the abolition of torture and capital punishment and a more humane punishment for prisoners (Rother 2007). More radical was Henri Grégoire (1750–1831), who audaciously advocated a universal religious tolerance, full emancipation of Jews, and full racial equality (Sepinwall 2005; Grégoire 1996). Similar thoughts of tolerance were defended by the Polish priests Hugo Kollataj (1750–1812) and Stanislaw Stazic (1755–1826) (Salmonowicz 1993; Butterwick 2010). In Rome, Pope Pius VI (1775–99) commissioned Nicola Spedalieri (1740–95) to write a Catholic response to the French Revolution's *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (1789). His *The Rights of Man* (1791) stirred up great interest since it pleaded for the grounding of the human rights in natural law and not in revelation. Moreover, it proved Christianity to be not only the inventor and promoter of human rights but also the fundament of any moral society. It soon became a bible for reform-oriented Catholics throughout Europe (Borghero 2010a).

(p. 601) Exegesis and History

The cliché that the Reformation directly led to the rise of critical exegesis has long been proven wrong, and the Renaissance humanists are now credited with it, but the achievements of Catholic exegetes have not yet been fully appreciated (Reventlow 1985; Reiser 2007: 233–237). The latter's works were certainly overshadowed by the many Protestant

exegetes who were able to work with less magisterial oversight and usually with less restrictive censoring institutions. Consequently, they could fully unfold their exegetical agendas and state bold ideas. Moreover, the majority of Catholic exegetes of the Early Modern period lacked a sufficient knowledge of the oriental languages and relied more heavily on the Greek and Latin manuscripts of the Bible. They made a greater use of allegorical or mystical interpretations of the text than earlier generations of scholars, both of which made their writings less respected in the Protestant-dominated world of biblical scholarship. By the end of the seventeenth century this had changed, and a steadily increasing number of highly skilled Catholic exegetes served the Church. The most important Catholic exegete of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century was Richard Simon (1638–1712), who developed an original hermeneutic to interpret sacred Scripture (Müller 2004). Against the rationalist Socinian interpretation of Scripture he insisted on a rule of faith that has to guide exegesis. Due to the overemphasis on the allegorical meaning of Scripture among his colleagues, he stressed the primacy of the literal meaning and supported Cardinal Cajetan's (1469–1534) rule according to which the explanation of a verse is acceptable if it suits the text and does not contradict the teachings of the Church even if it deviates from the consensus of the Fathers. He was also convinced that the doctrine of inspiration had to be rephrased intelligently, if it should withstand the criticism of Spinoza. Thus he stated that the human authors of the Bible were instruments of inspiration and made mistakes—due to the use of their own reason—in ordering the biblical narratives or even abbreviating their sources (Reiser 2007: 185–218; Rogerson 2008: 838–843). A generation later, the Benedictine Augustin Calmet (1672–1752) continued Simon's approach to exegesis, but avoided altogether the mystical interpretation of Scripture in his twenty-three-volume 'literal' commentary on all books of the Bible. In their criticism of Christianity, Diderot, Voltaire, and others depended substantially on the scholarship of Calmet, who had not avoided pointing to inconsistencies and falsities in the biblical texts (Schwarzbach 2001; Martin & Henryot 2008). Like his commentaries, Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible* (1720) was also widely read in Europe. It was translated into numerous languages and served for the next 150 years as *the* standard reference work (Rogerson 2008: 846). While Calmet was praised by the papacy for his work, his colleagues, the Jesuits Jean Hardouin (1646–1729) and Joseph Isaac Berruyere (1681–1758), were censored by the holy office. Hardouin, who was a fierce anti-Enlightener but at the same time an ardent proponent of literary criticism, was censored because his historical criticism led him to state that most writings of the Church Fathers were forgeries; Berruyere was censored because his *History* (p. 602) *of the People of God* (1728–58) paraphrased the entire Bible—often in a heterodox way—much like a romantic novel. Both also argued that historical records were irrelevant for understanding the Christian faith because they were unreliable. Only tradition, kept alive in the magisterium of the popes gave sufficient certainty to the faithful (Palmer 1967: 53–77; Chadwick 1987: 70–73). It was, however, the Catholic physician Jean Astruc (1684–1766) who is credited with opening the way of literary-critical analysis to the Old Testament. He had accepted the lack of integrity of the Book of Genesis as demonstrated by Hobbes, Spinoza, and le Clerc, but he did not share the common disbelief in Moses's authorship. Instead he argued that Moses compiled a series of sources. One of the main criteria for dividing up the biblical sources were the different di-

vine names ‘Jehovah’ and ‘Elohim’. With this view he made possible future differentiations of literary sources in the Old Testament and their reconstruction. The Oratorian Charles Francois Houbigant (1686–1784) followed Astruc’s principles and published in 1753 a four-volume edition of the Old Testament that reconstructed the text with the help of the Samaritan Pentateuch. It belongs to the finest achievements of early modern exegesis and is undeservedly forgotten (Rogerson 2008: 846–850).

A secularist approach to the Bible, as set forth by Protestant exegetes (Sheehan 2005), was often the reason why Catholic exegetes came into conflict with ecclesiastical or state censors. The most prominent case was that of Johann Lorenz Isenbiehl (1744–1818) of the University of Mainz in Germany. In his 1778 book on the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, he had insisted that the verse did not indicate the future birth of the Messiah, not even allegorically, and thus shared Anthony Collin’s and d’Holbach’s view that a prophecy must always be literal (Reiser 2007: 277–330). Similarly engaged with the historical-critical method was Johann Jahn (1750–1816), a Norbertine and professor of exegesis at the University of Vienna. In his *Introduction to the Old Testament* (1792; Engl. 1827) he came to the conclusion that the books of Job, Jonah, and Tobias were not historical accounts but educational poems, and that the New Testament healings of demonic possessions had to be explained naturalistically. His theory of inspiration, which followed the sixteenth-century Jesuit Leonard Lessius (1554–1623), attracted the most criticism. Inspiration was no longer distinguished into different types but conceived as preservation from error. Thus, authors of the Bible wrote according to their own imagination and experience, while divine inspiration only preserved the authors from writing anything incorrect but did not directly guide the minds of the scribes (Burtchaell 1969: 44–87). In England Alexander Geddes (1737–1802) worked ceaselessly on his project of a new translation of the Bible, which offered a mythopoeic reading of the Old Testament that influenced Blake and Coleridge. He also interpreted Scripture according to his political convictions, asserting in 1792 that the Hebrew commonwealth had been a republic and Moses a Jacobin (Goldie 2010). Less radical was the Salzburg Augustinian Aloys Sandbichler (1751–1820), who defended with great sophistication the reliability of the textual basis of the Bible (1783) since he saw the textual authenticity of sacred Scripture endangered due to excessive and limitless criticism (Raggenbass 2006: 237–247). Together with his Benedictine colleage Leander van Ess (1772–1847) he also worked for the improvement of biblical literacy among Catholics (Altenberend 2001).

(p. 603) The state of eighteenth-century exegesis brings us to the question as to how Catholic *dogmatic* theologians used the new insights of this field. Slowly but steadily the historical and literal meaning of Scripture marginalized the mystical interpretation of Scripture. Also, scriptural proofs were no longer placed in textbooks after tradition and ecclesiastical teachings, but before them. Theologians even moved away from amassing Scripture quotations to a more coherent biblical theology. Certainly the eighteenth-century preference for simplicity and historicity led to an overemphasis on the literal meaning of biblical passages, while the ideal of finding the essential aspects of Catholicism often led to theological minimalism. Nevertheless eighteenth-century pragmatism helped to rediscover the kerygmatic character of Scripture and led to a more anthropocentric theolo-

gy. In Germany, Engelbert Kluepfel (1733–1811) envisioned a ‘theology in the Spirit of Jesus’. In a similar manner, Bernhard Galura (1764–1856) used the ‘Kingdom of God’ as a systematic principle for theology in order to regain the original language, simplicity, and beauty of Christianity. The focus on the historical Jesus led Marianus Dobmayr, OSB (1753–1805) to state that Jesus’ sinlessness did not come without severe inner struggle and that his human knowledge was limited to what was necessary for his mission. Most ingenious was Franz Oberthuer’s (1745–1851) biblical anthropology, which the author wanted to be understood as a ‘philosophy of the Bible’. Despite his appreciation for a strictly historical and literal explanation of Scripture, his overriding principle was that a passage should be primarily interpreted anthropologically, to the extent that it answers the questions of human moral desires (Reinhardt 1970: 31–46).

There is no theologian who better embodies the Catholic Enlightenment quest to defend essential Catholic dogmas by explaining their intelligibility in modern terminology and by reconciling Catholicism with modern culture than Ludovico Muratori (1672–1750). Along with the achievements of the Maurists, his groundbreaking historical research contributed to a new historical consciousness that was necessary for the conceptualization of a development of doctrine. It was especially his book *On the Moderation of our Cleverness in Religious Matters* (1714) that inspired reform theologians throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It demonstrated, like no other book, what the Catholic Enlightenment intended, namely to reform Catholic theology and Catholic life by rediscovering the tradition and bringing it into dialogue with the best of contemporary thought. He despised radical, individualist theologians and instead argued for moderately free research within theology as long as it respected its borders, namely the deposit of faith. For Muratori, such a moderate Enlightenment of Catholicism was desirable to cleanse theology from fruitless speculation, superstitious beliefs (e.g. witchcraft; cf. Midelfort 2005), and excessive piety, and to lead it back to a discovery of its simple beauty and persuasiveness. He often reminded scholars that undecided theological questions could be freely discussed. This inspired many theologians throughout Europe to distinguish more carefully between the essence and the periphery of Catholicism. Regarding the interpretation of Scripture he pointed out that the Church Fathers deserve respect and veneration when they teach about Christ and the Church or about morals, or when they unanimously agree, but that in scientific questions, and everything besides faith and morals, one can follow other, better, (p. 604) truer, and more probable explanations wherever one finds them. Thus, a Copernican explanation of the world would not collide with the principles of scriptural exegesis (Muratori 1779: Book 1, ch. 23, 236–237). Moreover, Muratori also became famous for his outspoken criticism of excessive veneration of the saints. He detected such particularly in Marian devotions, especially in the so-called blood vow. In the Habsburg lands, a vow obliged candidates at universities before their graduation to swear an oath to defend the Immaculate Conception, if necessary with their life. Muratori vehemently rejected this practice, since the doctrine was not yet definitively settled. In *The Science of Rational Devotion* (1747) Muratori anticipated much of the liturgical renewal of the twentieth century when he demanded a simple, Christo-centric

liturgy that allowed full, conscious, and active participation of the laity (Rosa 2010: 218–222).

Ecclesiology, Politics, and the Christian

While academic theology attempted to find ways to communicate with the culture and science of its day, the popes of the eighteenth century had a predominantly hostile view of most Enlightenment ideas. They typically feared that such ideas could endanger faith, morals, and the influence of the Church. Only in the pontificate of Prospero Lambertini/Benedict XIV (1740–58) did the Church have a fruitful dialogue with modernity. As a canonist he had applied the insights from his friend Muratori to argue in 1729 against an official liturgical feast of the Sacred Heart, and in his main academic work on beatifications and canonizations (1734–37) he emphasized the heroic and thus moral virtues of the candidates for sainthood much more than miraculous deeds and mystical experiences. Nevertheless, he did not reject mystical experiences altogether, as can be seen from his recognition of the experiences of Caterina de' Ricci, whom Benedict canonized in 1746. Instead, he carefully moderated between the Enlightenment demands and the tradition of the Church, between a Tridentine appreciation of baroque piety and a moderate rationalism that desired religion to be free of excesses and fanaticism. Nevertheless, with the condemnations of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Beccaria, La Mettrie, d'Holbach, and Helvetius in the 1750s, the gap between the Enlightenment propagators and Church leaders widened and became insurmountable with the outbreak of the French Revolution and its aftermath (Rosa 2010: 232; cf. Printy 2005). The revolution itself had substantial theological roots in the public resistance of Jansenism against the crown and the Jesuits (Van Kley 1999).

The theological influence of Jansenism on eighteenth-century theology was immense. Especially appealing were its ideas of a reform of the Church in the spirit of the Early Church Fathers, a decentralized Church government, moral rigorism, better education and pay for clergy, practical education of the laity, and a certain liberality concerning individual religious practices, including the use of the vernacular in the (p. 605) liturgy (Strayer 2008). Jansenist and Gallican theologians contributed to a renewed ecclesiology when they criticized the monarchical role of the papacy and the attempts of Ultramontanist theologians to reduce the bishop's office to a mere derivation from the pope's office. In the course of the eighteenth century, Jansenist-Gallican ideas spread throughout Europe and achieved in the canonist works of Bernard Zeger van Espen (1646–1728) a sophisticated articulation (Cooman 2003). In the second half of the century, these thoughts were summarized in Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim's (1701–90) widely read *Febronius* (1762). The book inspired the movement of Episcopalism that sought to strengthen the office of bishops and minimize papal influence (Printy 2009; Lehner 2008). Many regarded Episcopalism as necessary since one could no longer expect reforms from the papacy. Besides the bishops, hope for reforms also rested on the sovereigns: for example,. on Maria Theresa (1740–80) or Joseph II (1780–90) in Austria (Beales 1987/2009)). In Habsburg Tuscany, Archduke Leopold (1765–90) convened the Synod of Pistoia (1786)

which, heavily influenced by Jansenism, articulated a more collegial system of Church administration. It also argued against the Curia '[…] that the bishop has received from Jesus Christ [and not from the Pope, U.L.] all the powers necessary for the good government of the diocese' (Bolton 1970: 99). The new ecclesiology of Beda Mayr OSB (1742–94), with his concept of limited papal and ecclesiastical infallibility, was intended to begin an ecumenical dialogue about a reunification of the Christian Churches (Lehner 2009a; Lehner 2009b).

The rise of Catholic Biblicism, the improvement of patristic theology, and eighteenth-century utilitarianism also engendered liturgical studies as a new theological discipline. New vernacular rituals were produced and journals launched in which theologians exchanged ideas about possible reforms. In 1784 Benedict Werkmeister (1745–1823) even began to celebrate Mass in the vernacular in Stuttgart. He and many of the more radical theologians, however, increasingly saw in the liturgy a means for moral instruction. Felix A. Blau (1754–98) summarized this position: 'All acts through which we become wiser and better are liturgical' (at Keller 1996: 22). Theologically questionable were their attempts to separate contract and sacrament in matrimony, and to deny the indissolubility of marriage altogether (Keller 1996: 44–64). The Synod of Pistoia (1786) wished to restore the liturgy 'as an action common to priest and people […] by bringing back the Liturgy to a greater simplicity of rites, by expounding the vernacular, and by pronouncing it in a clear voice' (Bolton 1970: 82). Its moderate liturgical reforms, however, were rejected by the bull *Auctorem Fidei* (1794) as dangerous, since it implied that the order of worship was corrupted or at best insufficient. Pastoral theology, which was also invented in the course of the century out of the desire to optimize the social utility of religion, was usually based on empirical knowledge without extensive theological underpinning. Its goal, as the works of Franz Giftschütz (1748–88) in Vienna show, was to instruct Christians to find inner happiness and righteousness. Consequently, such theologians viewed the Church solely in sociological and judicial terms (Arnold 1949: 79–98; Lehner & Printy 2010a). Most creative was Franz Xaver Mezler's (1756–1812) use of recent medical findings in order to create a 'pastoral medicine', which conveyed to future priests the indispensable elements of anthropology and natural history (Mezler 1794).

(p. 606) In moral theology the work of St Alphonsus of Liguori (1696–1787) proved to have the most lasting influence. Although not an Enlightener, he engaged with the thought of his time, learned from its style of argumentation, and ultimately conceived of a new form of person-centred moral theology that shaped Catholic moral theology until Vatican II. He defended the sacraments as a central part of moral theory and sanctification against rationalist critics and based his moral theory on a principle of gentleness that avoided laxism and rigorism (Printy 2005). Liguori's devotional book, *The Glories of Mary* (1750), reached more than a thousand editions and became a fundamental reference point for Catholic Mariology, making full use of modern ways of communicating theological knowledge to a broader public. After Vatican II the works of this doctor of the Church (1871) were increasingly marginalized, yet they are slowly being rediscovered (Dillenschneider 1931/34; Rey-Mermet 1989; Giannantonio 1999).

One of the first Catholics who developed ethical reflections on the modern economy was the Enlightener Antonio Genovesi (1713–69) in his *Diceosina* (1767), in which he reasoned that social relations had the final goal of happiness. Society was for him the place for the enjoyment of social relationships. Therefore, economic life:

> is an exercise of virtues: the market is a place to put into practice the virtues, in particular 'civic' virtues, such as the love of the common good and the control of individualistic passions. […] The market is the place where each agent is helping others to satisfy their wants. […] Public happiness is, as Genovesi and the whole tradition of *pubblica felicita* say, the sum of individuals' happiness. Within a theory of happiness as *eudaimonia*, the more individuals behave virtuously, the more individual happiness increases, the more civic virtues grow, the *happier* the population is
>
> (Bruni 2004: 28–29).

The engagement of Catholicism with the Enlightenment process was diverse in its methods but also in its results. While many theologians wanted to use modern thought to update Catholic theology in order to make it intellectually attractive and intelligible, some desired to restructure the entire deposit of faith. In its best form, the Catholic Enlightenment was the resuscitation of the Catholic Reform with modern means; at its worst, it amounted to theological subjugation to the state with heretical tendencies. The tendency of Catholic Enlighteners to work with the state against the papacy helps one to understand the latter's resistance towards state interventions in the nineteenth century and its increasing distrust in the Enlightenment after the French Revolution. By the end of the eighteenth century, the papacy had come to understand the power of the 'public' better than the Catholic Enlighteners. With an enormous gain of moral authority during and after the Napoleonic exile, the popes were able to use popular Catholic sentiment to strengthen their own position against nationalist tendencies. As a result a strong papacy and an Ultramontanist ecclesiology emerged that were able to homogenize the Church during the nineteenth century into a truly coherent, universal body that existed until the 1950s. However one views the Church's contending with modern thought in the eighteenth century, recent research has shown that many Catholic thinkers believed in (p. 607) the complementarity of modernity and Catholic theology, in the possibility of updating theological argumentation, and that modern science and thought can improve the faith life of the Church. The Catholic Enlightenment illustrates where the dialogue of the Church with modern thought was fruitful and where it failed, and can serve therefore as lesson and potential guide for twenty-first-century theology and its relationship to modernity. The existence of a broad spectrum of Catholic Enlightenments also calls into question such categories as Counter-Enlightenment and anti-Enlightenment, terms that have been used frequently to overlook the original eclecticism of Catholic thinkers in the eighteenth century and, consequently, exclude them from every canon of literature, philosophy, and even theology.

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The Development of Doctrine: The Tübingen School and John Henry Newman

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers two fundamental points of reference in modern accounts of how Christian doctrine may be said to develop. First, the chapter considers the arguments of the members of the Tübingen school, with a particular focus on Johann Sebastian Drey (1777–1853) and Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838). The second half of the chapter focuses on the work of St John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801–90). Although the degree to which Newman knew his Tübingen predecessors is hotly debated, there was a deep affinity between their approaches. The chapter considers the achievement of Newman's An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine against the background of his corpus as a whole.

Keywords: Newman, doctrine, doctrinal development, history, ecclesiology, modernity, evolution

ACCOUNTS of development of doctrine have, in one sense, been a part of Catholic theology since the beginning. Some of the first work of Christian theology, recorded in the pages of Scripture itself, is rooted in an effort to account for the relationship between God's revelation to Israel and the 'new law' proclaimed by Christ. Christian thinkers had to consider carefully how to describe the faith of the patriarchs. As Christianity aged, related questions arose. The authority of one thinker had to be weighed against another. The relationship between faith and its object was considered, or a later doctrine may have been described as an inference of an earlier one.

In all of this, however, the Church's teachers understood their work in relation to unchanging truth, and this primarily as a clarification of the truth given in an initial deposit of faith. Only in the wake of the schisms of the sixteenth century did Catholic theology face new questions about doctrinal change, as development was linked to polemical antagonism in new ways. Attempts to identify change or lack of change in Christian history correlated with efforts aimed at delegitimizing the authenticity of different Western churches. As Owen Chadwick famously demonstrated, for a seventeenth-century theolo-

gian—with Bishop Bossuet as his archetype—variation in religion demonstrated error; constancy in teaching indicated truth (Chadwick 1987: 1–20).

In the course of seventeenth-century scholasticism, debates arose about the status of truths that followed logically from revealed truths. Yet even if such influential Jesuit theologians as Francisco Suarez (1548–1617) and Gabriel Vazquez (1549–1604) allowed that something like development had taken place, they articulated this admission in scholastic terminology, debating whether conclusions drawn from articles of faith could, in themselves, be articles of faith (see also Chadwick 1987, Walgrave 1972: ch. 7). Their framework, when acknowledging progress, articulated legitimacy by minimizing the progress that had taken place. Still, it is worth noting that nineteenth-century theologies (p. 613) of development, as much as they signal a paradigm shift, owe a debt to earlier theorists of development and to the historical studies by such giants of early modernity as Denis Pétau (1583–1652), also known as Dionysius Petavius (for other celebrations of Pétau's importance see Rahner 1959; Geiselmann 1965; Lösch 1917).

In Catholic historiography, Newman has been largely regarded as *the* theologian of development. In his encyclopedia article on development, H. F. Davis writes: 'The first radically new and non-scholastic approach to this question was introduced into Catholic theology by John Henry Newman' (Davis 1962: 182). Although Newman's 1845 *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (Newman 1989) offers the first sustained treatise by a Catholic on the subject, one would be remiss to omit the Tübingen School's 'non-scholastic' approach to the question, which was articulated a full generation before Newman's *Essay*. Still, despite the overreach exemplified by Davis's statement, even the staunchest advocate of Tübingen's contribution would have to consent to Ian Ker's assessment that recent Catholic theologians dealing with development 'have looked to Newman as their main inspiration and source' (Ker 1989: xii. See also Thiel 1991: 63 for emphasis on the Tübingen contribution). This chapter aims to show not only how Newman worked through the problem of development, but how his Tübingen precursors articulated theories of development that would shape the Catholic reconciliation of salvific truths with historical investigation and with human contingency.

In his *Essay on Development* Newman refers to the Tübingen School by mentioning its most famous member, Johann Adam Möhler (Newman 1989: 29). This chapter does not enter into the debate about the influence of the former upon the latter, nor into an argument that would pit Tübingen against Oxford (on which see the debate between Chadwick 1987, and Shea and Parker 2013). Instead, it aims merely to demonstrate how three leading theologians of development came to hold the positions that they did. It begins with Johann Sebastian Drey (1777–1853), the 'founder' of the Tübingen School. In pairing not only Drey and Möhler, but also Tübingen and Oxford, the chapter will also show how the authors themselves embody the shape of authentic development that they attempted to describe. As a point of method, however, each thinker will be treated as intelligibly articulating his own theory of development.

The Development of Doctrine: The Tübingen School and John Henry Newman

Johann Sebastian Drey was the founder of and intellectual inspiration to subsequent members of what came to be known as the Catholic 'Tübinger Schule' (the best introduction to the Tübingen school in English is Hinze 2010. See also Warthmann 2011). Although he never devoted a monograph or article to the topic, in many ways his theory of development lies at the heart of his theological project. Unlike theologians a century or two earlier, whose philosophical presuppositions equated truth with static constancy, Drey's philosophical presuppositions, formed largely by German Romanticism and Idealism, led him to regard religious truth as a living reality. Therefore, doctrinal development was not something to be explained away or minimized, but was instead an important manifestation of Christianity's truth. This shift marked a departure from the thinking of previous centuries. The topic of development juxtaposed both the truth of Catholicism versus Protestantism, and the truth of a Spirit-filled God 'in whom we live and move and have our Being' over against a deist God no longer involved in (p. 614) the world (the connection between Drey's theology of doctrinal development and his apologetic against deism is made by Geiselmann 1940: 65). The spirit, as 'lifegiving Lord (*Dominum et vivificantem*)', animates the Church from its inception through every stage of its existence. God, therefore, 'appears not only in the foundation or in the beginning of our dogmatic system, but also in the entire development of this system, as a work of God and of God's Spirit' (Geiselmann 1940: 243). Foreshadowing his student Möhler, Drey places great emphasis on the Church as an organism, animated by the Spirit, and thus subject to growth and development as a sign of its life and truth.

As Stephan Lösch demonstrated a century ago, the Tübingen School borrowed from earlier Catholic theologians such as Johann Michael Sailer and Alois Gügler, who were already reconciling truth and history through Romantic organicism (Lösch 1917: 28–59, 129–152). Yet this borrowing was not an uncritical adoption. The Romantic worldview helps Drey articulate his Catholic apologetic in a number of ways, not least of which is through a 'monist' understanding of Christian history. For Drey, Christian history is *one* history from beginning to end. Understanding an episode of that history, say, the fourth-century Christological controversies, is successful only when placed in context with the whole (for the influences on Drey see Kaplan 2009: 8–24). Here it merits citing Drey at length:

> As to the fundamental view taken toward all the relevant phenomena, the higher idea of history demands that they be seen as the straining and struggling of one single principle, of *one living force* [*Geist*] which spreads beneath the forces of the age to take its own distinctive shape which *expands beyond itself* and draws all things into its orbit, forming into itself what is open to such formation and destroying what is in contradiction to it. All great phenomena of history must be viewed in this way. But Christianity especially has taken this view of itself, since it precisely and exactly describes the force of life [*Geist*] from which all its developments are derived.
>
> (Drey 1994: 81)

Christianity is more than an idea. It is a living reality, and thus any development it has undergone manifests the essence of Christianity just as well as an earlier, more original event. Christian history reflects this essence as ‘a living, unbroken whole’ (in Geiselmann 1940: 203). Drey’s theology, through and through apologetic, saw Protestantism as doomed from the start because it separated itself from the living body of the Church. Its knowledge of the God of Jesus Christ could only be external. Previously the theologian had ‘lived in the Church, i.e., in the intuition of the living organism, as it had developed from the life principle dwelling within it. His theology had thus been a facsimile of this organism’ (Drey 1984: 13–14). Theology separated from the living body, however, was foreordained to devolve into ‘exegesis’, because it exchanged life within the body of Christ for an external relationship to an ancient text. Drey continues, ‘It would come about sooner or later, that the whole of theology would turn into a grammar and a philology’ (Drey 1994: 15). Drey makes the same point in the *Brief Introduction* when he contrasts the reduction of theology to exegesis with the ‘living objective reality, which is (p. 615) generally recognized as the continuance of the originating event’ (Drey 1994: 20). This deformed version of true theology migrated into post-Reformation Catholic theology, which aped Protestantism by clinging to the letter, of not just the scriptural texts, but also of previous councils and theologians. It thus fell short of accomplishing what lies at the heart of Catholic theology: ‘to represent in a scientific system the still-*living* whole that had been presented to their intuition’ (Drey 1984: 22). Or as he puts it elsewhere, it is necessary to intuit ‘the whole as enlivened by an inner spirit’ (in Geiselmann 1940: 241).

Romantic organicism provided the framework for Drey’s understanding of doctrinal development as a mark of authentic Christianity. In addition, it helped him articulate a vision of Christianity as a historical reality, truer than an abstract idea or a universal principle. Yet a theology of development tethered exclusively to organicism posed a certain danger; one could easily project development as an inevitability having little or nothing to do with human freedom in history. As the work of John Thiel has shown, by 1819 Drey’s theology of development came to integrate the hermeneutical role of the individual theologian in mediating the truth of the past to the concerns and audience of the present (Thiel 1991: 63–94). This crucial turn, Thiel argues, came from Drey’s incorporation of Friedrich Schleiermacher’s account of theological reconstruction, laid out most clearly in his 1811 *Brief Outline* (Schleiermacher 1966. On Drey’s reliance on Schleiermacher see Himes 1997; Hinze 1993: 83–130, 191–237).

In order to see how Drey imagines the way in which an individual theologian or group of theologians might contribute to doctrinal development, it will be helpful to recount his understanding of the theologian. Drey lists the ideal qualities of a theologian, which include not only knowledge of languages and historical theology, but also a keen intelligence and even religious genius. In contrasting the necessary preparation with the necessary vocation (*Beruf*), Drey designates an ‘inner natural aptitude’ to the vocation of the theologian. If one lacks this vocation and aptitude, Drey claims, quite remarkably, then ‘one cannot transform a bunch of lifeless, externally derived ideas through free *reconstruction* into living knowledge nor actualize this knowledge in some sphere’ (Drey 1994: 45). John Thiel highlights the importance of this term, *Nachconstruiren*, and compares it

to Schleiermacher's divinatory hermeneutics (Thiel 1991: 85–90). To reconstruct for Drey is a matter of 'transforming oneself into the author' (Drey 1994: 80). A great theologian understands that one must do more than know terms like *procession* or *spiration* when talking about the Trinitarian missions. One must understand how the authors themselves used these terms in order to make a larger claim, and then relate that claim to the questions of the present day. Only then does the tradition become really present, and only then can one convincingly argue that these authors belong to one living entity, stretched through time, and across geographical and linguistic borders.

Augustine's theology of original sin provides a helpful example. The North African bishop's reading of Paul, especially Romans 5 and 7, shows an attempt to understand the way Paul himself thought about the relationship between Adam and Christ. Although Paul does not use the term '*peccatum originale*', Augustine discerned that such a phrase would most aptly relate a first-century Jewish argument to a fifth-century Latin debate. Augustine, to use Drey's words, 'refashioned the material of theology into living (p. 616) knowledge' (Drey 1994: 45). In doing so, Augustine's theological creativity or 'reconstruction' enabled the Church's doctrine to develop; the Fifth Session of the Council of Trent adopted and codified Augustine's terminology on original sin. The development of this teaching, therefore, had more to do with the 'religious genius' of a particular theologian than with an organic flowering of an idea.

In the section of his *Brief Introduction* titled 'System of Christian Doctrine', Drey gives his fullest treatment of doctrinal development. He contrasts a unified system of ideas that is 'the dead tradition of a bygone era' with one that is 'the development of a living tradition' (Drey 1994: 116). The latter system must acknowledge that not all of the Church's teachings have been decided. Those that have, such as the relationship between Christ's humanity and divinity, are fixed, while others, like the role of papal authority in Drey's time, are mutable (Drey 1994: 116–117). It makes perfect sense that the number of fixed teachings develops over time, for the Church does not reach consensus overnight. Development thus indicates a healthy body, whereas stagnancy indicates a sickly one.

By using an organic metaphor for the Church, Drey was able to imagine the Church's doctrine as dynamic. This refashioning conditioned how Drey locates orthodoxy in his understanding of the system of Christian doctrine. To be orthodox means to understand what is fixed as fixed, and to understand what is mutable in relation to what is fixed. To be heterodox is to regard what is fixed as mobile, for instance, to question the Holy Spirit's divinity. Importantly, however, Drey adds another category: hyperorthodoxy: 'Whoever denies the mutability of doctrine either because he rejects the idea altogether or elevates opinion into dogma is called hyperorthodox' (Drey 1994: 118). Just like the heterodox, the hyperorthodox confuse the mutable with the fixed. Ideally, for Drey, the theological community plays with the tension between the mutable and the fixed, and thus drives questions forward so that doctrine develops, as was the case in scholasticism (by which Drey means the style of theology dedicated to pushing questions to their limit). One example would be the immaculate conception of Mary. Scotus's teaching on this matter followed, in the context of a great many other theological positions, from the sinless birth of Christ.

This particular development of doctrine, however, did not result in a fixed dogma for several more centuries.

It is important to remember that ‘x and y axes’ of both freedom and development work their way into Drey’s mature account of development. Although the Church depends on the theologian’s individual genius and creative imagination in connecting past to present, the theologian also depends on the Church in order to participate theologically in Christ’s body. Without the Church, theology quickly turns into idle speculation. John Thiel notes: ‘Reconstructive interpretation that results in the development of doctrine is not the work of a theologian isolated form the church but the exercise of theological talent within and on behalf of the ecclesial community’ (Thiel 1991: 88). Drey’s theory of development relies on Romantic organicism while incorporating the Schleiermacherian notion of imaginative reconstruction.

If Drey had tempered his organicism by 1819, his student Möhler seemed intent on mining it for all its worth in his 1825 *Unity in the Church*. As will be shown, the same tension or framework between an ‘x axis’ of organicism and a ‘y axis’ emphasizing human (p. 617) freedom runs through Möhler’s work. In Möhler’s *Unity*, life precedes knowledge and the community precedes the individual. Therefore the salvific knowledge of the Gospel is subsequent to the life-giving spirit one receives in the Church:

> Just as we experience nothing historically of Christ without the Church, we experience him in ourselves only from and in the Church. The more we take up into ourselves the divine life flowing in her, the more alive the community of believers will be in us. The more we *live* internally in her and she in us, so much the more alive is the conviction from Christ manifested in us
>
> (Möhler 1996: 94).

As in Drey, the life-giving Spirit animates the Church and the organic metaphor explains not only the order of salvific faith, but also the argument for doctrinal development. A dynamic understanding of doctrine is a sign of religious authenticity, rather than an embarrassing fact that needs justification. Möhler continues: ‘Since Christianity is seen as a new divine life given to people, not as a dead concept, it is capable of development and cultivation’ (Möhler 1996: 111). It is not only capable of such development; it seems incapable of anything less. For an organic reality, to be is to grow; the doctrines of the Church develop because the body of Christ is animated by the life-giving Spirit: ‘Because the Spirit fills her, the Church, the totality of believers that the Spirit forms, is the unconquerable treasure of the new life principle, ever renewing and rejuvenating herself, the uncreated source of nourishment for all’ (Möhler 1996: 84). The early Möhler used a robust pneumatocentric ecclesiology that emphasized organic metaphors to talk about growth and to envision human freedom within the framework of a prior, communal reality.

Möhler’s logic in the *Symbolik*, as in *Unity*, is relentlessly ecclesial. *Symbolik* adds to his earlier work a certain Chalcedonian logic (I have left the German term *Symbolik* untranslated because the English ‘symbolism’ does not convey the appropriate sense of

'creeds' or 'statements of faith'). Möhler declares: 'As in Christ the divinity and the humanity are to be clearly distinguished, though both are bound in unity; so is he in undivided entirety perpetuated in the Church. The Church, his permanent manifestation, is at once divine and human—she is the union of both' (Möhler 1997: 259). This framework enabled Möhler to articulate more precisely how the particularly human element of the Church impacted the emergence and development of doctrine. The Church was not simply a sentient organism that grew according to the rules of plant and animal life; it was a human reality that followed human laws of growth. Most clearly in the *Symbolik*, Möhler augments his earlier Romantic-organic apologetic by focusing on the human elements particular to doctrinal development (for example, Möhler 1997: 259).

One observes this augmentation most clearly in the famous *Symbolik* #40, but it already emerges in #38, where Möhler defends the authenticity and infallibility of the Church's teachings. The true teachings in Christ are preserved not in Scripture alone, but in the living tradition of the Church, which both precedes the written word and manifests itself in it. As a divine-human reality, the Church preserves and develops the original teachings, which are also both divine and human: 'They would be divine, because (p. 618) they would have only worked out what was originally given, and applied it to occurring relations and circumstances; human because this development would have been carried on through the agency of men' (Möhler 1997: 281. For Möhler's increasing focus on human freedom, see Himes 1997: 181–208). This agency, one can presume, includes rationality, imagination, and other distinctly human manifestations of animality. The continued Chalcedonian understanding in *Symbolik* #38 could be overshadowed only by its ecclesial triumphalism: 'All the developments of its dogmas and its morality, which can be considered as resulting from formal acts of the whole body, are to be revered as the sentences of Christ himself, and in these his spirit ever recurs' (Möhler 1997: 281). Möhler relates the Church here to the only person of the Trinity who became incarnate. The Church does not simply manifest the truth of the Spirit, but of the Son, who, as fully human, already embodies not only the content but the human mode of exposition that the Church should imitate.

The emphasis on the human aspect of development continues in #40, where Möhler most concretely expounds his theory of development. The adjective 'human' [*menschlich*] resounds in the first two paragraphs. Möhler writes that divine truth is preserved by 'human organs', the Word of God came into 'human possession', and 'human faith', and was thus received by 'the energies of the human mind [*Geisteskräfte*]' and subject to 'human outcomes [*Schicksale*]'. The preservation of the word was subject to a 'human method'. Before the nineteenth century, theologians had tended to consider human mediation in matters of divine revelation flawed as such; the earliest manifestation of divine revelation was therefore the most authentic. In his earlier work, Möhler had tried to guard against this *originalist* tendency by making the Holy Spirit a guarantor of the divine rectitude in Church teaching. His later, Chalcedonian framework, however, enabled him to construe the human factor in doctrinal development in an unabashedly positive manner. Doctrine developed not just organically, but in a fully human manner: 'for various questions of dispute arose, the settlement whereof could not be avoided, and on that account claimed human reflection, and required the formation of notions, judgments, and conclusions—

things which were not possible to be effected, without tasking the reason and the understanding' (Möhler 1997: 289). The development of doctrine, then, looks like the development one might find in any science or field of knowledge. This judgement would condition his later dispute with Ferdinand Christian Baur, his famous Protestant counterpart in Tübingen.

The previous quotation hints at the role of heresy or untruth in the development of doctrine. Both Möhler and Drey concede that disputes led the Church to further clarify its teachings: Möhler cites examples from as early as the Jewish Christians whom Paul confronted, through the Gnostic and Pelagian controversies, all the way up to the Protestant Reformation. Möhler positively assesses the result of these struggles. Yet unlike earlier, logical understandings of development, Möhler claims that contemporary Christians have both a higher degree of knowledge and a deeper consciousness:

> Assuredly, in Christian knowledge we stand one degree higher than the period prior to the Reformation … The fact that the deeper consciousness of Christian truth is the (p. 619) result of context and struggle, and consequently matter of history, is of too much importance not to detain our attention for some moments
>
> (Möhler 1997: 291).

This reality of strife and disagreement, for Möhler, both explains the reason for certain development, and also shows the necessity of a 'living, visible authority' (on the centrality of a magisterium for Möhler's account see Voss 1943).

Here we can begin to see a cleft between Drey and Möhler. Despite the fact that both acknowledge the role of strife in the development of doctrine, thus positing a dialectical element in their theories, Möhler's account omits the creative role of theological 'reconstruction' that was so central for Drey. The Church reaches a deeper consciousness, but this consciousness comes from forging a formally new understanding of faith through the fires of doctrinal dispute. It does not arise from a hermeneutical divinization of a past theologian, say, trying to articulate to modern hearers what a medieval theologian might have meant by *praesentia realis* ('real presence') of Christ in the Eucharist (for more on their differences see Thiel 2007). As a student of Drey, Möhler no doubt knew the *Brief Introduction* and Drey certainly would have discussed the *Symbolik* with Möhler when they were colleagues in the *Wilhelmsstift* and lived under the same roof. One cannot know why Möhler departed from Drey on this matter, but one can venture an educated guess based on his dispute with Baur (for more on the dispute with Baur, see Friedrich 1975; Fitzer, 1974).

Möhler was concerned with preserving the divine just as much as he was with vouchsafing the authenticity of the human. In the *Symbolik* he recalled a distinction between the substantial and the formal on matters of doctrine; development only happened formally, not substantially. This trope was common to Tübingen and continued in Möhler's greatest student, Johannes Evangelist von Kuhn (see Kuhn 1859–62: 152–166; Thiel 2006). For Möhler, the fundamental Christian reality of the Incarnation, which was a historical fact,

not an idea, conditioned the field of theology. This conviction became concretized in his dispute with Baur. Their dispute in the 1830s played out at a feverish pace, and led Möhler to revise *Symbolik* four times between 1833 and 1838, as well as issue a monograph response—*Neue Untersuchungen*—which he wrote in 1834 and revised, in response to Baur's response, one year later (see Himes 1997: 209–322).

As Möhler read it, the idea preceded historical reality in Baur's dialectic. As a logical consequence, theological development possessed no specific difference from development in any other scientific field. Thus, the famous triadic structure that Baur puts forward, says Möhler, depends on a 'historical-speculative' method in order to achieve the higher unity between opposed positions. This results only in a 'speculative faith,' not a historical faith (Möhler 1834: 480). Wither the Incarnation? Möhler asserts: 'The kind of development that advances through antitheses never truly derives from the character of the possible knowledge in this field. It is impossible, in other words, that pure knowing can ever pass over into positive, divine faith, because the latter is of an entirely different origin and kind' (Möhler 1834: 481. For Baur's relationship to Hegelian dialectic see Hodgson 1966: 54–70, 207–212). Christianity starts with the in-breaking of God into (p. 620) human history, which precedes rather than follows from any human understanding. From this reality Christian theology orients itself. Baur, according to Möhler, misses this point:

> Baur's fundamental error consists in the fact that he claims that Christian doctrine can be found through the process of oppositions [*Gegensätze*]. We, on the other hand … attempt to draw out and to research more deeply the teaching that is already *given* and known. We attempt to incorporate this more clearly into our consciousness. This is the task of Christian science of religion, which does not seek authority, but rather begins from it. Faith itself is the eternal presupposition of all Christian knowledge. A Christian theologian who wants to locate faith through scientific opposition seeks only himself.
>
> (Möhler 1834: 482)

Möhler's riposte against Baur followed logically from his Chalcedonian framework as well as the role of the Incarnation as a theological lodestar for his ecclesiology. It tethered him to a certain conservatism (and a recourse to ecclesial authority) that such scholars as John Thiel have seen as a regression more than an advance on the theology of development articulated by Drey. Both of their theologies, however, demonstrate a theological *praxis* in which the search for truth involves a pushing forward, a spirit of revision, and a willingness to delve more deeply into a question, both by taking seriously one's interlocutors and by retrieving tradition as a continually live option for theological discussion.

John Henry Cardinal Newman

In his treatment of development in the Church's doctrine, John Henry Newman demonstrates both striking similarities to, and important differences from, the thinkers of Tübingen. One of the most striking differences results from the context in which he approaches

the topic. If the schisms of the sixteenth century, and resulting divisions among Christians form the larger, structural reality within which the thinkers of Tübingen do their work, for Newman this is a personal reality. This is true, however, in a complex way. By the time of the publication of his best-known work on the topic, *An Essay on Development*, Newman had made the move from Anglicanism into the Catholic Church, and it has been widely assumed that the *Essay* functions essentially as an *apologia* for that move. The writing itself, however, was completed earlier, and there is a somewhat nuanced story to tell.

As an enthusiastic member of the Oxford Movement, and indeed its chief spokesman, Newman urged the restoration and re-establishment of traditional practices of the faith, including the sacraments, episcopal governance, and apostolic succession. Many Anglicans, including even moderate high churchmen, resisted this attempt at reclamation as 'Romanism'—and insisted that these practices were not the legacy of the (p. 621) apostolic faith, but rather corruptions thereof. Newman thus had his challenge: he must convince his co-religionists that these changes in Christian doctrine did not constitute distortions, but rather legitimate new forms of the faith. And, for Newman, larger ecclesiological questions were intimately involved. By the 1830s, Newman was searching for a reliable way in which to identify the true Church. His ecclesiological question, however, was first a question of the nature of development—and this was the question that drove the composition of the *Essay*.

Long before the *Essay*, the issue had appeared to Newman in the context of his study of early Trinitarian thought. In careful study of the primary texts, Newman came to a conclusion that is now widely accepted: the earliest generations of Christian thinkers held to positions that would, after the council, be described as subordinationism. Jan Walgrave summarizes: 'It seemed clear, then, that the doctrine of Trinity as defined by the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople was not distinctly understood and professed in pre-Nicene times and that the most august truths of Christian faith had been shaped in the mind of the Church by a gradual process of development' (Walgrave 1972: 298). But if this were so, Newman saw, there might very well be an analogy between post-Nicaean development and post-Tridentine development. Walgrave goes on:

> If development must be excluded, then the Council of Nicea cannot be justified and the very principle of dogma is endangered. If it must be admitted, then a post-patristic development of doctrine becomes probable, and it could be that the Council of Trent was no less justified than that of Nicea
>
> (Walgrave 1972: 299).

In thinking through how it was that he had already accepted the first, Newman formulated an account of how this was so—and, therefore, how he might also accept the second.

The core of his answer to this question lies in an analogy to human thought. Tellingly, he says that it is 'from the nature of the human mind' that 'time is necessary for the full comprehension and perfection of great ideas' (Newman 1989: 29). The dynamics of human understanding are the ground upon which he goes on to argue that increasing distinct-

ness in human apprehension of an object is not only possible but expected. In the end, indeed, he insists that development is not a problem, but a crucial and promising sign: ‘In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often’ (Newman 1989: 40).

As noted, this constitutes a sort of organic model, with some similarities to the Tübingen thinkers—and the influence of Möhler on Newman, an influence often doubted, has been upheld by recent scholarship (Shea and Parker 2013). It is important to note, though, that this model is not an evolutionary one, nor, even less, a simple notion of ‘progress’. Nor is it that of the nineteenth-century scholastic theoloians who articulated a certain model of ‘development’ by relying on an analogy with logical deduction. The new insights are, in Newman’s model, genuinely ‘new’, at least as perceived historically. But they occur both in relation to previous doctrines and also (p. 622) in reference to something that exceeds all previous doctrines, what Newman calls the ‘Idea’.

Newman’s use of the term is not perfectly clear or univocal, but the notion of the ‘idea’ is absolutely central to his thinking on these matters. An idea is a complex reality, more complex than any notion about it, never fully explicable in human language. It can never be fully expressed by any concrete articulation of doctrine, nor, further, by any *collection* of doctrines: ‘Because one can never succeed in making explicit all the aspects of a great idea the term idea finally signifies an ideal toward which one’s knowledge tends without ever reaching it completely’ (Newman 1989: 34). A comparison might be made to ‘*mysterion*’, or ‘mystery,’ as the Greek term was used by the first Christians, a term with which Newman was well acquainted—although he himself never drew the comparison. An Idea always exceeds any notional expression thereof, and so its many aspects must necessarily be articulated over a long period of time, as a wide variety of cultural and historical circumstances elicit various instances of those notional expressions. Thus, Newman famously says, ‘Truth is the daughter of time’ (Newman 1989: 47) If the *unfolding* of the Idea happens according to the shape of human understanding, it is also important to note that the idea, for Newman, includes revelation—or God’s objective word spoken to humanity—as well as ‘Christianity’, which is the human apprehension of that fact. Ultimately, the ‘idea’ is ‘living’ because it is God’s own living word.

The presentation of the ‘idea’ in the *Essay* should be compared with that in his fifteenth ‘University Sermon’, written only a year previously. In that context, his language is more fluid; he speaks of an inward idea or belief in the singular, but he speaks also of a collection of ‘ideas’. These ideas are also a ‘living impression’ or ‘a collection of judgements and impressions’. This phenomenon is the result of the mind’s reception of and initial attempts to comprehend divine activity—a comprehension which maybe conscious or only half-conscious. In any case, it is a reception of and reflection on that which is received as divine gift. This collection of judgements or living impressions is also ‘what Scripture calls knowledge’. Newman also writes:

> This … is what Scripture seems to designate by the phrases ‘Christ in us’, ‘Christ dwelling in us by faith’, ‘Christ formed in us’, and ‘Christ manifesting Himself unto

> us'. And though it is faint and doubtful in some minds, and distinct in others, as some remote object in the twilight or in the day, this arises from the circumstances of the particular mind, and does not interfere with the perfection of the gift itself.
>
> (Newman 2006: 223–224)

Newman thus sees the idea or collection of ideas as the result of Christ's impress on the soul. He does not explicitly develop here a fully Catholic account of theological faith; he focuses on the theological framework within which we may speak about such gift, Christ's effective presence to the soul.

Given that Newman speaks of the Church's tradition as an 'accustomed and unconscious mode of viewing things', (Newman 1990: 269) it seems clear that we see here some form of an appropriation of the concept of the 'unconscious mind', as it (p. 623) appears in Schelling, Coleridge, Freud, and others. In his later, Roman Catholic writings, Newman referred to this 'habitual and unconscious mode' as the '*intimus sensus*', or 'deep sense'. In his reflections there, he speaks explicitly of a process in which what is at an earlier point held 'unconsciously' became conscious to the collective mind of the Church. This initial 'wordless' unconscious possession is an intuitive grasp of an indistinct whole; unfolding development, then, is not only analysis and inference based on existing doctrine, but also process in which, in particular historical moments, particular aspects of the whole rise from the status of implicit to explicit. Later formulations, then, might be described as implicit in earlier ones, but not simply in a logical sense. Accordingly, Newman assigns no priority to earlier formulations over later ones.

This process of moving from unconscious to conscious, Newman further explains by comparison of the faith of a child with that of an adult. Children, he says, know things with powerful immediacy. In knowing God, for instance, a child has:

> … an image of the good God, good in Himself, good relatively to the child, with whatever incompleteness; an image, before it has been reflected on, and before it is recognized as a notion. Though he cannot explain or define the word 'God', when told to use it, his acts show that to him it is far more than a word
>
> (Newman 1985: 79).

Walgrave makes important aspects of this vision clear when he takes issue with Owen Chadwick's statement that for Newman 'the original revelation … was partly given in explicit doctrine, partly in feelings which were left to be subsequently drawn out into doctrines':

> The error here lies in the 'partly… partly'. According to Newman there is no question of indistinct feelings added to doctrines, but of a real apprehension of the whole through a partial notional apprehension of the same, pointing to that whole … All that the Church now believes or ever will believe is contained in the inspired records of what happened in Christ. Nevertheless, although entirely contained in

> the primitive Creed, the content of revelation is not explicitly unfolded in it. Through illuminating grace, revelation, presented to man by the words of the message, impresses upon the mind of the faithful and the Church as real idea of the whole, imperfectly represented yet completely indicated by Scripture … Development, therefore, is not only the expansion in the mind of a wordless 'idea-impression', but at the same time and in the same measure the explication of the content of the original message … the same process of development considered as a whole is as well a clarification of a presence of that whole to realizing apprehension as it is an elaboration of what is contained in the primitive message. In the process of development, the former functions as a medium to the latter, as the latter is a medium to the former … There is more in it than can be justified by formal logic. But at the same time the process will not be illogical or irrational. Reflection will afterward be able to show that the various points are related to one another in such a way as to form a consistent pattern.
>
> (Walgrave 1972: 306–307)

(p. 624) For, although this original 'idea' changes *with respect to us* during the course of its realization in human, Newman can regard this process of change with equanimity because he believes the 'idea' to be *quoad se*, or itself, 'immutable' (Newman 1989: 55). At the same time, '[i]t changes in order to remain the same' (Newman 1989: 40). In other words, a divinely originated idea, in the context of human reasoning, must—in order to be true to itself—develop: 'from the nature of the human mind, time is necessary for the full comprehension and perfection of great ideas' (Newman 1989: 29).

The process itself is a complex one, involving all of the many individual faculties of reason—induction, deduction, and others—and even some beyond reason. It is not consciously driven by reason, nor is reason even always aware of it; it is rather a spontaneous movement, sparked by a preconscious dynamic at work in the mind. And, in some senses, it surpasses reason; this ongoing articulation of various aspects of the Christian Idea is not simply intellectual. Revelation, for example, addresses the conscience as well as mind. Owen Chadwick says:

> The revelation was given as a unity, as a totality, addressing itself to the hearts and feelings and consciences as well as to the mind of men. It was given partly in the form of propositions. And partly, Christian thinkers have needed to draw out and formulate, not only the intellectual consequences of the given propositions, but the rational expression of what they at first experienced wordlessly and which could only be formulated as their feelings and experiences encountered opposition, error, pagan philosophy, or evangelistic success
>
> (Chadwick 1987: 153).

Guiding the ongoing process of development is a capacity Newman calls the 'illative sense'. The term first appears in the *Grammar of Assent*, where Newman describes the illative sense as an intellectual analogue to the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis*. The 'illa-

tive sense'—named after the Latin *illatus* and illation—carry over—describes the day-to-day ability of the human mind to draw together many small pieces of evidence into a grand conclusion that is not strictly warranted by logical criteria. Aidan Nichols describes it thus:

> A whole host of features of experience conspire to *carry us into* (the original Late Latin sense of *illatio)* the more spacious realm of a conclusion larger than any of them. The heaping together of tiny indications, none of which by itself is conclusive, produces certitude in ordinary human affairs. At some point there is a qualitative change in the quantitative amassment of evidence. Spread out the pieces of a jig-saw on a table, and it may be only probable that they are more than an accidental collocation. Fit them together and there will be no doubt
>
> (Nichols 1985: 362–363. For Newman's own account see 1985: 222ff.)

More flexible than logical inference, the illative sense allows assent and, we might say, commitment in complex, concrete circumstances. The illative sense is a human capacity, but Newman is clear that, in the case of the Church and its developing doctrine, it is (p. 625) guided in this delicate process by the Holy Spirit. It is important to conclude by saying that this process of development of doctrine, a gradual, cumulative process by which various aspects of the truth of Christian revelation become explicit, is not one properly belonging to any individual mind, but rather to the Church as a whole. The increasingly explicit idea here is God's revelation to the Church, and the 'mind' at work is the corporate mind of the Church.

With the broad strokes of Newman's theory in place, it is possible to return to Newman's immediate, practical question: how it is possible to see later doctrines, even when they display some form of genuine newness as true developments, and not corruptions of earlier doctrines? Newman provides an answer in two different senses: formally and materially. In a formal sense, his answer is conviction that the corporate mind of the Church finds its spokesman in the bishop of Rome and, more specifically, in his teaching office. This communal process of development is trustworthily focused in an individual voice, to which all Christians can look.

In a material sense, his answer lies in the seven criteria for genuine development he lists in the *Essay*. These could be described as the 'marks' that make it possible to recognize true development. Newman gives them in this order: (1) preservation of its type; (2) continuity of its principles; (3) its power of assimilation; (4) logical sequence; (5) anticipation of its future; (6) conservative action upon its past; and (7) its chronic vigour. Each could be explored in detail, but the first, 'preservation of type', is the most central, and sums up much of what has already been said. In short, changes in external form only prove the ongoing identity of the idea. Newman says:

> An idea then, does not always bear about it the same external image; this circumstance, however, has no force to weaken the argument for its substantial identity, as drawn from its external sameness, when such sameness remains. On the con-

> trary, for that very reason, unity of type becomes so much the surer guarantee of the healthiness and soundness of developments, when it is persistently preserved despite their number or importance
>
> (Newman 1989: 178).

In other writings, Newman attempts to explain himself less in his very personal and essayist style, and more in the style of contemporary scholastic writing. In 1847 Newman composed a series of twelve theses for Fr. Giovanni Perrone, S.J., a highly regarded teacher in Roman College (which would eventually become today's Pontifical Gregorian University). Perrone's comments on the document show him both sympathetic to Newman's position and yet coming at its dogmatic concern from a rather different angle. Newman speaks of the Word of God in an objective sense as, in the first instance, present in the intellect of the Spirit and given in its fullness to the apostles (Gaffney 1997: 11). But, subjectively, that word exists in the actual minds of people, and from this perspective it can be said to grow: 'a series of dogmas, taught by pastors and learned by the faithful, grew up over the years, and continues to grow … whatever additions are made to the deposit are not really new, but evolved out of what is already there. (p. 626) So Christian dogma really grows … there is no new beginning of truth, but the continuance of a real tradition' (Gaffney 1997: 23). Perrone's reaction to Newman's statement reveals not so much a clearly divergent theology, as it does strong differences in tone, and a concern to safeguard the immutability of the deposit of faith. ' The deposit is not expanded, for it always remained unchangeable … dogma does not grow in itself. But it does grow quantitatively in relation to us, evolving into greater explicitness and more distinct awareness of articles that have been defined' (Gaffney 1997: 25). And yet, despite this difference in emphasis, the two theologians are at one in admitting that doctrine *does* unfold, and in speaking of the consciousness of the Church, the subjective mind of the Church, as the context within which this unfolding occurs. Both Newman and Perrone seem to owe something to Möhler in this regard (Shea 2010).

In the nineteenth century, the extent of Newman's influence varied. He was well received in Rome for a time (see Shea 2017), but his move to Catholicism made him suspect to former Anglican readers. When the encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* was issued in 1907—with its description of a modernist tendency to describe the history of the Catholic religion as '[hiding] some *unknown* element', and its current form as the 'product of the progressive development of the germ which [Christ] brought into the world' (*Pascendi*, 35)—many wondered whether it was directed at Newman.

In Catholic theology's ongoing challenge of responding to modern thought, however, Newman's thought on these matters proved invaluable, and it is difficult to overestimate its eventual influence. Even in the short term, Perrone seems to have been influenced by his exchanges with Newman in his approach to the most important 'development' of the day: the definition of the Immaculate Conception. As he addressed the question of the 'new' dogma, Perrone noted that the Church recognized not only explicit revelation, but other truths 'either hidden in it implicitly and half-dark and covered as it were by some

veils …' It is also likely that Newman's work influenced other members of what has become known as the 'Roman School', including such thinkers as John Baptist Cardinal Franzelin (whose 1870 *De Divina Traditione* would remain a classic treatment of the subject for decades). For many of these figures—and for later Neo-Thomist theologians—the development of the material expression of the Catholic faith was best described using the language of logical deduction. Newman's vision is far broader—and would ultimately take centre-stage in Catholic reflection on the topic. Often called the 'Father of Vatican II', Newman's influence is nowhere more obvious than in *Dei Verbum* ('The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation'), and especially in *DV* 8, which speaks of 'a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down'.

A mention of Vatican II is perhaps appropriate at the conclusion of this chapter. Just as the important nineteenth-century accounts of development described here must be seen in the context of division among Christians, so division is now connected to, and indeed, even grounded in differing accounts of development. The 'Father of Vatican II' might be surprised—or even pained—to see the way that present-day Catholics are at odds with one another as they interpret the Council and Catholic theology since the Council, on the basis of very different understandings of development.

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The CouncilS of Trent and Vatican I

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers two important ecumenical councils of the Church in the modern era: Trent (1545–63) and Vatican I (1869–70). The chapter examines in detail the key teachings of each council. The reform decrees of Trent will only be discussed in so far as they touch upon dogmatic decrees. In the case of Trent the chapter identifies the key documents from the many sessions of the council over its twenty-year history, offering a clear guide to ways in which its teachings on revelation, grace, and justification offered a precise Catholic response to the emergent theologies of Protestantism. Vatican I's key teachings on revelation, the knowledge of God, and the status of the papacy are similarly treated.

Keywords: Trent, Vatican I, grace, justification, infallibility, Reformation, revelation, council

THE importance of the Council of Trent (1545–63) and the First Vatican Council (1869–70) for the history of Catholicism can hardly be exaggerated. Unlike some councils that barely left a doctrinal mark, such as the Fifth Lateran Council (1512–17), these two councils have determined the historical trajectory of Catholicism up to the present. Trent left such a deep impression on the life of the Church that the period after the council is frequently referred to as 'Tridentine'. The significance of these two councils is not merely historical, it is primarily theological and dogmatic. The Council of Trent eventually issued sixteen dogmatic decrees touching on almost every aspect of doctrine that is most distinctively Catholic. Vatican I's two dogmatic constitutions have also been highly influential for Catholic theology. *Dei Filius* not only condemned atheism, pantheism, materialism, semi-rationalism, and rationalism, but also provided dogmatic guidance on a host of issues central to fundamental theology. As Cardinal Henry Manning noted, in *Dei Filius* the council 'has defined truths which have never been treated by any Council before' (Manning 1996: 128). Vatican I's other dogmatic constitution, *Pastor aeternus,* resolved the debate over the nature of the primacy and infallibility of the pope that had been simmering since the Middle Ages. Most notably, Trent and Vatican I issued numerous dogmatic definitions resolving definitively a number of theological issues. In contrast, while the Second Vatican Council (1962–5) issued two beautiful and authoritative dogmatic constitutions, it inten-

tionally refrained from issuing any definitive declarations of either revealed truth or non-revealed truth. These two councils remain relevant today, for Vatican II grounded itself in them, citing them over forty times. Thus to understand Vatican II, one must first understand Trent and Vatican I.

The Council of Trent

The immediate cause of the Council of Trent was the revolution of Martin Luther, who began in 1517 by questioning the propriety of a number of practices surrounding (p. 631) indulgences, but in 1520 he rejected the hierarchical and sacramental nature of the Church. In that same year Leo X (r. 1513–1521) condemned forty-one propositions drawn from the writings of Luther (DH 1451–92) and gave Luther sixty days to recant. When Luther did not recant, Pope Leo X excommunicated him in January of 1521. After his excommunication, Luther repeatedly called for a 'free Christian Council on German soil'. His call for a council was received coolly by the Church since by 'free' Luther meant free of any papal control, a condition that was impossible given the Church's understanding of itself as a supernatural institution led by the vicar of Christ, the pope. The papacy was also reluctant to call an ecumenical council for other reasons, fearing both the re-emergence of the heresy of conciliarism and the myriad financial and political problems attendant with holding a council.

Nonetheless, this rebellion of Luther's, which, from a Catholic perspective, had attacked the teachings of Christ Himself, required a pastoral and theological response. After much delay, Pope Paul III (r. 1534–49) decided to hold an ecumenical council in order to resolve the religious division that wounded the Church. Initially he called for a council to meet in Mantua in 1537 and then in Vicenza in 1538, but neither could be held due to the political climate in Europe. Eventually in 1542, Paul III summoned the council to Trent. The choice of Trent as the location of the council was really a compromise. The French, Germans, Spanish, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the papacy all feared that if a council was held in any of the others' lands it might be unduly influenced by that power. The council was again delayed due to a war between Charles V (r. 1519–56) and Francis I (r. 1515–1547). In the bull of convocation, *Laetare Jerusalem* (1544), Paul III summoned the council again to Trent and identified three reasons for holding the council: to end the doctrinal discord dividing the unity of the Church, to reform the Christian people, and to send a military expedition to liberate the faithful under occupation by the Turks.

Period I (1545–1547) Sessions 1-8 at Trent, 9-10 at Bologna; under Paul III

The council—which commenced its first period (1545–47) with sessions one to eight at Trent and sessions nine and ten at Bologna—finally opened on 13 December 1545 with four cardinals, four archbishops, twenty-one bishops, and five superior generals of mendicant orders. The council was to be presided over by three papal legates, Cardinals Gio-

vanni Maria Ciocchi del Monte (1487–1555), Marcello Cervini (1501–55), and Reginald Pole (1500–58). The first two were later elected pope. Before the council could begin, the pope had to decide whether the council should give priority to dogma or reform. Charles V wanted to avoid doctrinal issues that might alienate Protestant members of his empire and so desired that the council should first deal with questions of reform. Paul III, however, thought that the priority belonged to doctrinal questions and was wary of questions of reform that might touch on the Curia. A compromise was made in which it was decided that the council would deal (p. 632) simultaneously with questions of dogma and reform, such that each session would issue a reform decree and a dogmatic decree. In its dogmatic decrees, the council decided to avoid resolving those matters that had been debated frequently by the various Catholic schools of thought, and it decided not to condemn heretics by name, choosing instead to condemn those errors that trespassed on the teachings of Christ and His Church.

As was customary in councils, one of the first acts of the council was a profession of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. After some debate about whether to begin with the issues of original sin and justification or the sources of revelation, the legates began with the latter for two basic reasons. First, it touched on one of the two central doctrines of Protestant theologians: *sola scriptura*. Second, Scripture and Tradition were to be the theological basis of all subsequent decrees of the council; it was therefore necessary to be clear about their relative value theologically. In the fourth session the council promulgated its first dogmatic decree on Scripture and Tradition, which was approved on 8 April 1546. In this decree, the council taught that the gospel, ‘the source [*fontem*] of all saving truth and norms of conduct’, was ‘promulgated’ by Christ, who commanded the apostles to ‘preach’ it to all creatures. This gospel is preserved ‘in written books and unwritten traditions’ (*On Scripture and Tradition*; Tanner 663, DH 1501). By ‘unwritten tradition’ the council was not speaking of what is often called ecclesiastical tradition such as the writings of the Fathers of the Church or conciliar documents, but rather of Tradition as a source of revelation distinct from Scripture. The council further decreed that Scripture and Tradition are to be accepted with ‘the same sense of loyalty and reverence’ (*pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia*) (*On Scripture and Tradition*; Tanner 663, DH 1501). A few fathers had objected that the Scriptures could not be treated as equal to Tradition and suggested that the phrase ‘an equal affection of piety’ should be changed to ‘a similar affection of piety’. This suggestion was ultimately rejected and the original wording was retained, further indicating that Scripture and Tradition were both equally sources of revelation. With these statements the council clearly rejected the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*.

The council did not, however, resolve the precise relationship between Scripture and Tradition. An early draft of the decree read: ‘This truth [of the Gospel] is contained *partly* [*partim*] in written books, *partly* [*partim*] in unwritten traditions’. This formulation clearly suggested that neither Scripture nor Tradition was by itself sufficient as a source of revelation since each contained merely part of Revelation. The *partim–partim* formulation was changed in the final decree to a simple *et*: the Gospel is preserved ‘in written books and (*et*) unwritten traditions’. Unfortunately, it is not known why this change was made. The

majority of the council fathers, however, continued to hold to a *partim–partim* view of the matter (later called the two-source theory of Revelation), and was followed by Catholic theologians until the twentieth century. In the mid-twentieth century, however, Joseph R. Geiselmann argued that the council's decree had been fundamentally misunderstood. Geiselmann argued that when Trent used the term *et*, it had intended to leave the question open. He then proposed the theory that Scripture is *materially* sufficient but not *formally* sufficient. This attempt to reread the council met with staunch opposition from theologians such as Charles Boyer, who argued that the point of the council's decree on Scripture and Tradition was to affirm the insufficiency of (p. 633) the Scriptures against Protestants. The Second Vatican Council did not resolve this debate and in *Dei Verbum* simply quoted the relevant parts of the Tridentine decree (for a sample of Geiselmann's reasoning, see Geiselmann 1962; for the scope of the debate, see Moran 1963, Rahner and Ratzinger 1966).

Various Protestant theologians had challenged the canonicity of significant parts of the Old and New Testaments, rejecting such books as First and Second Maccabees, Hebrews, and James. The council therefore provided a list of the seventy-three canonical texts that must be accepted 'with all their parts', for God was the 'author' (*auctor*). Trent's list was taken from the Council of Florence's *Decree for the Jacobites* (DH 1335) and was virtually identical to that of the Synod of Rome in 382 and the Councils of Hippo (in 393) and Carthage (in 397) (*On Scripture and Tradition*; Tanner 663–4, DH 1502–4). In addition, the council insisted that the sacred Scriptures cannot be interpreted contrary to the teaching of the Church, since she is the 'judge', not of Scripture but of its interpretation. Moreover, the council forbade interpretations that were contrary to the 'unanimous teaching of the Fathers' of the Church. Finally, the council declared that the old Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible is an 'authentic' text for use in the Church (for all three points, see *On the Acceptance of the Vulgate*; Tanner 664–5, DH 1506–8).

On 17 June 1546, in the fifth session, the council promulgated its *Decree on Original Sin* containing five canons. This remains the most definitive statement on original sin to date by the extraordinary magisterium. The council began with a condemnation of the errors of Pelagius and only then moved on to the errors of Luther and the Anabaptists. Thus the first three canons, essentially a recondemnation of Pelagianism, make liberal use of the language of the synods of Carthage (in 418) and II Orange (in 529). This condemnation of Pelagianism was necessary since one of the principal objections of Protestant theologians against the Catholic Church was that it had become essentially Pelagian. In canon one, the council taught that Adam broke God's law and was punished by God for this transgression. With this punishment, Adam, 'body and soul, was changed for the worse', lost his 'holiness and justice', earned the wrath of God and death, and fell captive to the devil. In canons two and three, the council reaffirmed that Adam transmitted to his descendants not only bodily death but also that sin which is the 'death of the soul' and a loss of 'holiness and justice' (*On Original Sin*; Tanner 666, DH 1511–13). This sin of Adam is transmitted to all by natural generation and not by imitation. The council was absolutely insistent that original sin could not be taken away by the forces of human nature or by the observance of the natural or divine law but only by the merits of Jesus Christ applied to the

unregenerate in baptism. The council studiously avoided, however, the issue of the nature of original sin, leaving untouched the theories of the various schools.

In canon four, the council insisted against the Anabaptists that newborn infants were to be baptized, since they derive from Adam original sin, which must be expiated by the cleansing of the sacrament. In canon five, the council completely rejected both Luther's doctrine of the ongoing presence of sin after Baptism and the General of the Hermits of St Augustine, Girolamo Seripando's (1493–1563) doctrine of the presence in man of something hateful after Baptism. Instead, the council held that the guilt of original sin (p. 634) is remitted by Baptism and anathematized anyone who says that the 'true and proper nature of sin' is not taken away by the grace conferred in Baptism. Baptism so transforms men that they are made 'innocent, unstained, pure, guiltless, have become beloved sons of God'. Therefore, after Baptism, God hates nothing and men are no longer under His wrath. The council also taught that concupiscence, i.e. an inclination to sin, remains in the baptized and that concupiscence is not 'truly and properly' sin in those born again. Lastly, the council stated that it did not intend to include in this decree on original sin any teaching on the immaculate Virgin Mary (*On Original Sin*; Tanner 667, DH 1515).

On 13 January 1547 in the sixth session, the council promulgated its *Decree on Justification* (Tanner 671ff, DH 1520ff). For the first time, the council introduced long doctrinal explanations in sixteen chapters preceding its thirty-three canons anathematizing errors. The chapters are arranged according to the three states of justification. The first state (*status primus*) is a transition (*translatio*) from non-believer to faithful (chapters 1–9), i.e. man's initial justification. The second state (*status secundus*) finds the justified individual in a state of grace, living a life faithful to Christ and growing in justification in order to obtain the end, heaven, which Christ desires for him (chapters 10–14). The third state (*status tertius*) is how man who has lost justification by mortal sin can restore this justification through the sacrament of Penance (chapters 15–16). This tripartite division allowed for conceptual clarity in dealing with the place of works and merit in the Christian life.

In its treatment of justification, as in its treatment of original sin, the council again began with a clear rejection of Pelagianism, and on this point the council fathers and Protestant reformers were in fundamental agreement. Accordingly, the council taught that as a result of original sin men are slaves to sin and 'under the power of the devil' so that neither the Gentiles by the power of nature nor the Jews by the Law of Moses were able to liberate themselves. Nevertheless, free will, though 'weakened and distorted', was 'in no way extinct'. The only way that one can be redeemed is through Jesus Christ, though not everyone receives this benefit but only those to whom His merit is imparted. The council went on to teach that the beginning of justification is through 'prevenient grace', with which man freely cooperates and not on account of 'any previous merits'. The council is clear that 'neither faith nor works' merit the grace of justification; therefore, initial justification is entirely gratuitous (*On Justification,* 5; Tanner 672, DH 1521, 1525, 1532). With

respect to initial justification, there are many points of convergence with the Lutheran and Reformed traditions.

The Council of Trent then described justification in terms of Aristotelian causation (*On Justification,* 7; Tanner 673, DH 1528). Trent is sometimes faulted for the insertion of Aristotelian terminology into an otherwise biblical presentation; however, the genius of this insertion is that it helps to make clear two central claims: the theocentric/Christocentric orientation of justification as well as the relationship between God's work and man's. The council specified that the final cause of justification of the ungodly is 'the glory of God and of Christ' and the salvation of those who are justified. The principal efficient cause is the merciful God. The meritorious cause is the passion and death of Christ. Baptism is the instrumental cause of justification. Perhaps the most (p. 635) important element of the *Decree on Justification* was the council's designation that 'the single formal cause' (*unica formalis causa*) of justification is 'the justice of God, not that by which He Himself is just, but by which He makes us just'. By the addition of the word 'sole' (*unica*) the council intended to repudiate the doctrine of double justification held by such eminent Catholic theologians as Cardinals Gasparo Contarini (1483–1542) and Girolamo Seripando. This justice of God refers to habitual or sanctifying grace, which is an inhering righteousness and not an imputed righteousness. With this inhering righteousness, one is truly made righteous, not with an imperfect righteousness but with an absolute and perfect righteousness. This inhering righteousness by which we are formally just comes in various measures, in accordance with the Holy Spirit's will and human cooperation. It is proper to each justified person and is distinct from the divine righteousness itself, which is God Himself, and from Christ's own righteousness, from which it derives and on which it depends (Washburn 2015: 197).

The transformation that takes place in initial justification has profound implications for the nature of Christian life. Growth in justification seemed impossible for many Protestant theologians given their understanding of justification as the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the sinner. Trent affirmed that after initial justification, one's justification is not static; rather it is capable of growth; there is an ongoing transformation that takes place in the justified Christian. Thus Trent defined that 'through observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, they increase in that very justice received through the grace of Christ, by faith cooperating in good works, and they are even more justified' (*On Justification,* 10; Tanner 675, DH 1535). It cannot be stressed enough that this growth is an increase in justification itself, an increase that comes about by the justified doing good works and observing the divine law with the assistance of grace.

Protestants generally held that observance of the law was impossible due to man's corrupt nature. Moreover, for many Protestant theologians, law and gospel are not just distinct concepts but also antithetical ones. The function of the law is condemnation; the gospel, on the other hand, invites one simply to receive the offered grace of the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation. In contrast, Trent taught that there are two fundamental elements that lead to the possibility of the justified Christian actually fulfilling the law. First, the Gospel reveals the divine will for man by teaching the law. In canon 21, Trent

even anathematized anyone who says that Christ was not a 'lawgiver' (*legislator*) (*On Justification,* canon 21; Tanner 680, DH 1571). The council went on to argue that God does not command the impossible, so it is both possible and necessary for the just man to fulfil the law. Second, the justified man is a new creation, and this new objective condition, accomplished by God through the infusion of sanctifying grace, makes possible the fulfillment of the lawgiver's law. Indeed, Trent anathematized both those who teach that 'the commandments of God are impossible to observe even for the man who is justified' and those who teach that the Gospel is 'merely absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition that the commandments must be observed' (*On Justification,* canons 18 and 20; Tanner 680, DH 1568, 1570).

The possibility and necessity of observing the law for salvation lead to a basic affirmation about the importance of merit in the Christian life. In the concluding chapter of (p. 636) the *Decree on Justification*, Trent took up the fruit of justification, i.e. the merit of good works. In chapter 16 and canon 32, the council definitively taught that for the justified Christian, life eternal is proposed both as 'a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God' and 'as a reward' which, according to the promise of God, is to be given for one's good works and merits. Christ continually infuses into the justified man grace, which always precedes, accompanies, and follows his good works. These good works make man 'pleasing to God and meritorious', and the justified are considered to have satisfied the divine law by those works. Nonetheless, Trent insisted that merits are not to be understood merely as the gift of God nor are they merely the merits of Christ. Canon 32 is quite clear that good works done in grace are truly and properly 'the good merits of the justified man himself' and thus in part the result of the activity of the agent. This teaching necessarily follows the assertion, in chapter 16, that even the justice one receives in justification is not only 'called ours' but is indeed 'our own personal justice' since it is merited by us. Lastly, Trent specified that there are four objects of merit: an increase in grace, eternal life, the attainment of that eternal life (if he should die in grace), and an increase in glory (*On Justification,* 16 and canon 32; Tanner 677–8 and 681, DH 1545–6, 1582).

In the seventh session (3 March 1547), the council took up the issue of the sacraments in general and the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. Most Protestant theology had reduced the number of the sacraments to two (Baptism and Eucharist), denied the efficacy of the sacraments *ex opere operato*, and denied that the sacraments are a cause of an increase in justification. The council anathematized those who deny that the sacraments of the New Law were all instituted by Christ (either directly or indirectly), those who deny that they are 'truly and properly' sacraments, and those who assert either 'more or fewer than seven' sacraments, which it enumerated as Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony (*On the Sacraments*, canon 1; Tanner 684, DH 1601). The council had already defined in the sixth session that Baptism was the instrumental cause of justification. The council now defined that the sacraments of the New Law are 'necessary for salvation' since they both 'contain' the grace that they signify and 'confer' grace on those who do not place an obstacle in the way (*On the Sacraments*, canon 4 and 6; Tanner 684, DH 1604, 1606). The sacraments of the New Law 'confer' the grace they signify in virtue of the rite performed (*ex opere operato*) (*On the*

Sacraments, canon 8; Tanner 685, DH 1608). By reaffirming the efficacy of the sacraments, the council was again repudiating the doctrine of justification by faith alone so fundamental to Protestant theology, for faith alone in the divine promise is not sufficient to obtain justifying grace. To the contrary, Christ instituted the sacraments as necessary instruments in His plan of salvation: it is through the sacraments that He brings people into friendship with God and makes them grow in that friendship. Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders also imprint on the soul ‘a certain spiritual and indelible mark, on account of which they cannot be repeated’ (*On the Sacraments*, canon 9; Tanner 685, DH 1609).

Concerning Baptism, the council defined that real and natural water is necessary for Baptism, that baptisms performed by heretics who have the intention of doing what the Church does, and that are performed with both valid matter and form, are valid, and that Baptism is necessary for salvation. Furthermore, conscious of the necessity of works for (p. 637) salvation, the council taught that the baptized must observe ‘the whole law of Christ’ and ‘all the precepts of holy Church’ (*On the Sacraments*, canon [on baptism] 7 and 8; Tanner 685–6, DH 1620, 1621, 1628). Finally, the council anathematized those who deny that Confirmation is a ‘true and proper sacrament’ and those who deny that the ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop.

Unfortunately, rumours of an epidemic of typhus circulated in March 1547 and so the papal legates with the consent of the majority of bishops transferred the council from Trent to Bologna, then under papal control. Fourteen bishops, mostly from Habsburg lands, objected to the transfer and remained in Trent. The majority, however, continued their work in Bologna, reopening the council on 21 April 1547. The council fathers worked on a number of important doctrinal questions, further discussing the sacraments, the sacrifice of the Mass, Purgatory, and the veneration of the saints. While none of the doctrinal work discussed could be adopted in Bologna, it did lay the foundation for the future work of the council. The emperor, Charles V, repeatedly objected to the transfer, and so Paul III decreed a suspension of the council’s deliberations on 16 February 1548. Paul III died on 10 November 1549.

Period II (1551–1552) under Julius III

The second period of the council (1551–52, sessions eleven through sixteen) was overseen by a new pope. On 7 February 1550, Giovanni Maria Ciocchi del Monte was elected pope and took the name Julius III (r. 1550–55). He had agreed in the conclave to reopen the council and so after his election he transferred the council back to Trent on 14 November 1550. On 1 May 1551, the council reopened, but it did not begin its deliberations until late August. As a result of the preparatory work that had been done in Bologna, the council was able to complete quickly the decrees on the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance.

On 11 October 1551, at the thirteenth session, the council solemnly approved the *Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist*, containing eight chapters and eleven canons. The council was concerned principally with defending the real presence of Christ

in the Eucharist in opposition chiefly to the doctrine of Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and Calvin. The council defined that 'the whole Christ' (*totus Christus*) was 'truly, really, and substantially (*vere, realiter et substantialiter*) present under the species of sensible things (*On the Eucharist,* 1; Tanner 693, DH 1651). The term 'truly' was employed to exclude Zwingli's idea of the mere figurative presence of Christ, the term 'really' to show that Christ's presence is independent of the recipient's faith in the sacrament, and the term 'substantially' to oppose Calvin's view that Christ is only present in His power. Moreover, the council rejected Luther's view that Christ was only present in use (*in usu*), maintaining instead that after the consecration, the body and blood are continually present in the Eucharist. The council affirmed, as a consequence of this ongoing presence, that the Holy Eucharist can be reserved in a sacred place and that the worship of *latria*, which is due to God, is also due to this sacrament.

(p. 638) The council went on to affirm the totality of the real presence so that immediately after the consecration, the 'true body' of Christ and His 'true blood' together with His soul and divinity exist under the species of bread and wine. On account of the hypostatic union, Christ's divinity exists with His body, blood, and soul. On account of a natural concomitance, both Christ's body and blood are present under the species of either bread or wine. Therefore, Christ whole and entire exists under the species of bread, even in very small pieces, and likewise the whole Christ is present under the species of wine (*On the Eucharist,* 3; Tanner 695, DH 1640).

The council also provided guidance on the means by which bread and wine are changed into the whole Christ. The council declared that the whole substance of the bread is transformed into the body of Christ and the whole substance of wine is transformed into the blood of Christ. Trent extended this change only to the substances of the bread and wine: the species of bread and wine remain after consecration. The council stated that the Church 'very fittingly' (*aptissime*) calls this conversion from bread and wine to the body and blood of Christ, 'transubstantiation' (*On the Eucharist,* 4; Tanner 695, DH 1652). Moreover, the council anathematized anyone who, like certain Lutherans, said that in the sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remain together with the body and blood of Christ (consubstantiation).

Concerning the reception of the Eucharist, the council distinguished three modes of reception. The first type of communion is a merely sacramental Communion where those guilty of sin receive the body and blood of Christ but do so to their damnation. Following the injunctions of Paul (1 Cor. 11:28–9), the council taught that one guilty of mortal sin must first receive the sacrament of Penance before receiving the Eucharist and that faith alone is insufficient for the worthy reception of the Eucharist. The second type of communion is spiritual Communion where he who is in a state of grace receives the Eucharist only spiritually. Spiritual Communion can only be made by one in the state of grace. The third type of Communion is where one in a state of grace receives Communion both sacramentally and spiritually (*On the Eucharist,* 8; Tanner 696–7, DH 1648).

On 25 November 1551 in the fourteenth session, the council promulgated the decree on the sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction. Protestant theology's frequent repudiation of the sacrament of Penance was in part a result of its peculiar doctrine of justification in which one cannot lose justification, rendering penance superfluous as a cause of the restoration of justification. The connection between justification and the sacrament of Penance had already been touched upon by the council in the fifteenth chapter of its decree on justification. There the council had reaffirmed that the sacrament of Penance restores the justification lost by mortal sin. Now, in the decree on Penance, the council reaffirmed that the sacrament of Penance is 'truly and properly' a sacrament that Christ instituted for the forgiveness of post-baptismal sins for those who, through mortal sin, have delivered themselves 'to the bondage of sin and the devil's power' (*On Penance,* 1; Tanner 703, DH 1668).

Trent asserted that the form of Penance consists in the words, 'I absolve you, etc.' and the 'quasi-matter' is the acts of the penitent, namely contrition, confession, and (p. 639) satisfaction. Among these acts, contrition holds 'the first place' and consists in the sorrow of the soul, detestation of the sin committed, and a resolution not to sin again. The council noted that God can reconcile man to Himself through perfect contrition without the sacrament, but perfect contrition always contains within it the desire for the sacrament itself. Imperfect contrition, or attrition, arises from the fear of hell and the 'heinousness' of sin. Unlike perfect contrition, attrition cannot justify man before he receives penance, but it prepares the way for justification through penance (*On Penance*, 3; Tanner 704–5, DH 1676–8).

The council was also insistent on the necessity of auricular confession. Christ instituted 'the complete confession of sin' as a necessity for all who sin mortally after Baptism. The penitent must include in his confession all mortal sins and any circumstances that change the sin's nature. The council further noted that while it is not necessary to confess venial sins, it is 'right and profitable' to do so (*On Penance*, 5; Tanner 705–6, DH 1680). Confession must be to priests, whom Christ left behind as our 'rulers and judges'. The priest alone is the minister of Penance, and he exercises the role as 'judge' who pronounces sentence because he has the power of the keys to retain or forgive sins. Those who have entered the Church and have sinned are to be placed like 'criminals before the tribunal'. The council was so emphatic on this point that it anathematized those who reduce the priest's role to declaring to the penitent that his sins are forgiven since penance is also a 'judicial act' (*On Penance*, canon 9; Tanner 712, DH 1709). Finally, the council affirmed against Luther that Extreme Unction is truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ and promulgated by James the Apostle (Jas. 5:14). The anointing of the sick confers grace, remits sins, and alleviates sickness. Again, like Penance, the priest alone is the proper minister of Extreme Unction (*On Extreme Unction*, 1; Tanner 710, DH 1695).

After issuing this decree, the council was suspended in the sixteenth session on 28 April 1552 due to the war between Charles V and the Protestants, not to be reopened until 1562. Julius III died on 23 March 1555, succeeded by the saintly Marcellus II, uncle to St Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), whose reign lasted a mere twenty-two days. Marcellus

was succeeded by Gian Pietro Cardinal Carafa (r. 1555–9), who took the name Paul IV. Carafa was a reformer who lived an ascetic and penitential life and who had helped to found the Theatines. As pope, he recognized the need for quick action to resolve the problems that were wounding the Church. He was, however, deeply sceptical about the ability of the council, which had now been going on for seven years, to solve the division that racked Christendom, and he decided that he could more efficiently resolve these problems on his own.

Unfortunately, although saintly and well-intentioned, Paul IV made a number of poor decisions. He imprisoned Cardinal Morone for heresy and attempted to imprison Cardinal Pole, who was a former papal legate to the council. He published in 1559 the first *Index of Prohibited Books* to help stop the flow of heretical and corrupting texts into Catholic lands; however, almost everyone found this index too restrictive. He also promoted his nephew, the profiteering and unscrupulous Carlo Carafa, to the College of Cardinals; unfortunately, the pope did not recognize the ill effects of promoting his (p. 640) nephew until late in his pontificate. So unpopular was Pope Paul IV that after his death a mob threw his statue into the Tiber.

Period III (1562–1563) Under Pius IV

The third and final period of the Council of Trent (1562–3, sessions seventeen to twenty-five) commenced after a ten-year prorogation of the council when the Church faced a host of new problems. When Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603) ascended the throne of England, she began to reverse her Catholic sister's policies, and England once again became a Protestant land. In France, the Huguenots were threatening to divide or even conquer the country. This latter problem had important consequences for the direction of the council. During the first and second periods of the council, the fathers were primarily concerned with the religious problems in German-speaking lands; hence the council's focus on the errors of Luther and Zwingli. The spread of Calvinism in France gave an urgency in this third period to respond to the errors of Reformed theology. So for the first time a significant number of French bishops, led by Cardinal Charles de Guise, attended the council.

The new pope, Pius IV (r. 1559–65), had agreed during the conclave to continue the council, and so the council was reopened on 18 January 1562. The question naturally arose whether a new council should be convoked or whether it should be a continuation of Trent. Catherine de Medici (1519–89) and Emperor Ferdinand (r. 1558–1564) both desired a new council, hoping that it could reshape the decrees on crucial issues such as justification in order to pacify the Protestants in their countries. Ultimately Pius IV, supported by Philip II of Spain, decided on a continuation of the Council of Trent.

In its twenty-second session the council took up the issue of the sacrifice of the Mass. From the beginning of the Reformation, the doctrine of the sacrificial nature of the Mass was continually attacked by Protestants. Luther once famously described the Mass as worse than 'all cases of homicide, theft, murder', in part because he thought that Catholics were attempting to resacrifice Christ. Against this teaching, the council assert-

ed that the Mass is a ‘true and proper sacrifice’, eschewing any merely metaphorical understanding of the Mass as sacrifice (*On the Sacrifice of the Mass*, pro.; Tanner 732, DH 1751). It is principally a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving whereby we glorify God as our Supreme Master and offer Him thanks for His generosity. The Mass is also a ‘truly propitiatory’ sacrifice by which God is appeased and rendered propitious to the living and the dead. It is a representation of the unique sacrifice of Christ. The sacrifice is also impetratory, whereby God grants ‘the grace and gift of penitence and pardons even the gravest crimes and sins’. The sacrifice can also be offered for temporal punishment and ‘other necessities’ (*On the Sacrifice of the Mass*, 2; Tanner 733–4, DH 1743).

In the face of Protestant objections the council was clear that the Mass is not a resacrifice of Christ; rather the Church offers a sacramental sacrifice in which Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is ‘represented,’ or made present again on the altar. In the Mass, there is an (p. 641) essential identity between the Eucharistic sacrifice and that of the cross. In the Mass and on the cross, the sacrificial gift, Christ, and the primary sacrificing priest, Christ, are identical. It is the mode of offering that distinguishes the sacrifice of the Mass from that of the cross, for on the cross Christ’s self-offering was bloody, while in the Mass it is unbloody. Through the Mass the saving power of Christ’s once-and-for-all sacrifice is ‘applied’ to the daily sins committed by man.

In the twenty-third session, the council promulgated a decree on the sacrament of Orders, studiously avoiding the doctrinal issue of episcopal residence that had at various points so agitated the council fathers. The question at issue was whether bishops were obliged by divine law to reside with their flock or whether the pope could dispense them of this obligation so that they could serve him in the Curia. Instead the council contented itself to affirm that the sacrament of Ordination is a sacrament instituted by Christ Himself. This decree was primarily concerned with condemning the Protestant rejection of a ministerial priesthood. The council affirmed that in the New Testament, there is a visible and external priesthood and that this priesthood has the power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord and the power of forgiving and retaining sins. Sacred ordination is ‘truly and properly’ a sacrament instituted by Christ (*On the Sacrament of Order*, canon 3; Tanner 743, DH 1773). In Ordination the Holy Spirit is imparted and by the sacrament a spiritual character is imprinted; as a result he who has once been a priest cannot again become a layman. In this decree the council also taught that the Catholic Church has a hierarchy instituted by divine ordinance, which consists of the bishops, priests, and ministers. The closest the council came to dealing with the controverted issues surrounding the episcopacy was to affirm that bishops are superior to priests and that they have the power to confirm and to ordain. The council did not resolve the issue of the relationship of a pope to a council or whether the episcopal consecration was a sacrament in the proper sense of the term. These two issues had to await Vatican I and Vatican II respectively.

At this point Pope Pius IV’s health began to fail. Fearful that the council would not conclude, the fathers decided to accelerate the process. In the twenty-fourth session, the council affirmed that marriage is a sacrament and declared under what conditions it is

validly celebrated. It also reaffirmed the indissolubility of a ratified and consummated marriage and infallibly condemned the practice of polygamy.

Finally, in the twenty-fifth session the council took up the issues of Purgatory, indulgences, and the cult of saints. The council said surprisingly little about these matters, given that they were catalysts for the Protestant revolt. The brief decree on Purgatory taught that Purgatory (*purgatorium*) exists and that the souls detained there are helped by the prayers of the faithful, especially by the sacrifice of the altar (*On Purgatory*; Tanner 774, DH 1820). Bishops were instructed to avoid 'in homilies to uninstructed people the more difficult and subtle questions'. The council also affirmed that indulgences are useful and that the Church, by the power of the keys, has authority to grant them.

To remove any doubt regarding the validity of the decrees of the first and second periods, these were reapproved. The session finally concluded with the singing of the *Te Deum* and the signing of the decrees by the council fathers. The council was thus (p. 642) concluded. Pius IV's bull, *Benedictus Deus* (26 January 1564), confirmed all the council's decrees and threatened excommunication *latae sententiae*—an automatic excommunication—to anyone who would publish commentaries on and interpretations of the decrees of the council without approval of the Holy See.

The First Vatican Council

Background

In order to understand why the First Vatican Council was called, it is necessary to understand the social, political, and intellectual context which preceded it. By the late nineteenth century a number of problems, both external and internal, were confronting the Church. The various revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe had progressively executed her clergy and religious. In the French Revolution alone, it has been estimated that 2,000 priests were executed and tens of thousands exiled in the name of 'liberty'. These revolutions despoiled the Church of her lands and forcibly suppressed religious orders; marriage and the education of Catholic youth were taken over by secular states.

These external difficulties were in part the result of intellectual currents that were fundamentally hostile to the nature of Christianity itself and particularly to Catholicism. The principal intellectual problems were the rise of rationalism and liberalism. Rationalism such as that of Voltaire (1694–1778) and Emmanuel Kant (1724–1804) asserted that human reason was the final test of all truth. Likewise, liberalism asserted man's absolute autonomy in the intellectual, moral, and social orders. The key element in liberalism was what Newman called its 'anti-dogmatic principle and its developments' that sought to reject the normative value of divine revelation. Ultimately, both rationalism and liberalism rejected Christianity as a supernatural institution and as a consequence attempted to eliminate Christ and His Church from the social and political life of Europe.

Some Catholics thought that the best way to oppose rationalism and liberalism was to engage these errors and they did so in two distinct ways. First, some Catholics rejected reason almost completely. In the fideism of Louis Bautain (1796–1867), faith becomes the only or ultimate source of all knowledge of God and spiritual things; in the traditionalism of Félicité de Lamennais (1782–1854), all human knowledge of God and religion comes from a primitive tradition or revelation given to our first parents. Second, other Catholics such as Georg Hermes (1775–1831) and Anton Günther (1783–1863) so exaggerated the power of reason, asserting that one could even provide rational demonstrations of the supernatural mysteries of Christian revelation such as the Trinity. This ‘semi-rationalism’ gave rise to quite diverse positions from Tritheism to pantheism.

The papacy was concerned with the baleful effects these errors were having on the faithful and repeatedly condemned these errors either personally or through decrees (p. 643) of various dicasteries. Leo XII condemned indifferentism (1824); Gregory XVI condemned indifferentism and rationalism (1832), the errors of Hermes (1835), and those of Bautain (1844). In the first year of his pontificate, Pius IX continued this trajectory by condemning, in *Qui pluribus,* a whole host of errors including indifferentism and rationalism, and he affirmed the credibility of the Christian religion and the infallibility of the pope. Pius IX also condemned the traditionalism of Augustin Bonnetty in 1855, the errors of Günther in 1857, ontologism in 1861, and indifferentism in 1863. These condemnations culminated in *Quanta cura* and the *Syllabus of Errors* of 8 December 1864, but there was a sense that these papal doctrinal interventions were not having the desired effect.

The Church was troubled also by errors that had their origin in the fifteenth century during the Great Western Schism. The first of these was conciliarism, a theory that a general council of the Church is higher in authority than the pope, and the second was Gallicanism, a theory that limited the authority of the pope in relation to the college of bishops. These two related errors were condemned repeatedly. Pius II had condemned appealing to a council against a papal decision in the bull *Exsecrabilis* (18 January 1460). What would be termed Gallicanism from the nineteenth century—a collection of doctrines asserting the superiority of the authority of the College of Bishops over that of the Pope and/or the ability of king and clergy in France to restrict the pope’s power over the Church in that nation—continued to grow into the seventeenth century, culminating in the Four Articles of 1682 (*Declaration of the Clergy of France*). Article two taught that a council is superior to a pope and article four taught that the pope’s decrees become irreformable ‘only when they have received the consent of the church’. While Alexander VIII (Pope 1689–91) condemned these articles in 1690, these errors continued to spread to Germany under the name of Febronianism and to Austria under the name of Josephism. Jansenists, too, came to repudiate papal supremacy and infallibility after being repeatedly condemned by various popes. Pius VI condemned, among other things, Gallicanism in 1794. Gallicanism’s tenacity was such, however, that in 1825, the Sacred Penitentiary was being asked whether priests who adhered to the Four Articles could be absolved. Again repeated papal condemnations did not resolve the problem. On the eve of Vatican I, Gallicanism was still a living reality that agitated the life of the Church.

Opening of the Council

Two days before the publication of the *Syllabus of Errors* and *Quanta cura*, at a meeting of the Congregation of Rites, Pope Pius IX privately informed the cardinals present that he desired to hold an ecumenical council in order to deal with problems facing the modern world. Pius then consulted serially with the cardinals then present in Rome, next a small commission of cardinals, and then thirty-four bishops about whether a council was opportune and what problems it might address. The majority in each of the three groups responded positively to the need for a council. They also suggested a (p. 644) number of disciplinary and doctrinal issues to be taken up, but at the core was the necessity of dealing with the aforementioned contemporary errors. Finally, on 29 June 1867 at the celebration of the eighteenth centenary of St Peter's Martyrdom over the tomb of St Peter, Pope Pius publicly announced the convocation of a council in his allocution to the 500 assembled bishops. In Rome feverish preparations were made for the council. Three dogmatic constitutions, twenty-eight disciplinary and juridical constitutions, eighteen constitutions dealing with religious life, one that dealt with Eastern rites, and one concerning the missions were produced for discussion at the council.

Almost immediately Gallicans and Ultramontanes began writing letters and works attempting to influence the future course of the council. It soon became clear what the most controversial issue at the council would be: papal infallibility. It is sometimes maintained that the debate between Gallicans and Ultramontanes at the council was over whether the pope was infallible; but this was not the case. Gallican bishops, like Charles-Henri Maret (1805–84) and Felix-Antoine-Philibert Dupanloup (1802–78), accepted a doctrine of papal infallibility but rejected the opportuneness of the definition. They also thought that papal infallibility required some type of consent of the Church but were at odds with each other over whether this consent should be antecedent, concomitant, or subsequent to the papal definition. A few extreme Ultramontanes such as William G. Ward (1812–82) held that virtually every papal decision on the faith was infallible. Other moderate Ultramontanes such as John Henry Newman (1801–90) and Archbishop Henry Edward Manning (1808–92) agreed on a moderate view of infallibility but vigorously disagreed over the opportuneness of defining papal infallibility (Washburn 2016: 745).

After a preparatory period of two years, the pope formally opened the council at the first public session on 8 December 1869 with over 731 bishops present. On 6 January 1870 in the second public session, the council fathers made, as is customary at councils, a public profession of faith.

Dei Filius

The first schema on the Catholic faith had been composed by Johannes Franzelin, SJ (1816–86), consisting of eighteen chapters and entitled *Schema of the Dogmatic Constitution on Catholic Doctrine against the Many Errors Derived from Rationalism*. The debate on the first schema began on 28 December and lasted until 10 January. The bishops

thought that the initial schema was not sufficiently pastoral, and so the text was returned to the deputation *de fide*. Joseph Kleutgen, SJ (1811–83) substantially revised and shortened the text into nine chapters. On 18 March this revised schema was put before the bishops, and this version, too, was further shortened into four chapters and eighteen canons. In a public session on 24 April, the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith,* called by its incipit *Dei Filius,* was unanimously adopted by the 667 fathers.

Its first chapter and corresponding first five canons are directed against the errors of atheists, materialists, and pantheists. The council defined that there is 'one true God' (p. 645) who is the Creator of all things, and formally condemned materialism. It then went on to affirm that God is 'distinct from the world in existence and essence' and issued a corresponding formal condemnation of pantheism. God created both spiritual creatures and corporeal creatures from nothing, as well as the human creatures who are at once spiritual and corporeal. Finally, the council stated that God in His providence 'protects and governs all things' (*Dei Filius* 1; Tanner 805–6, DH 3001).

In chapter two, the council took up the nature and extent of revelation. The council dogmatically affirmed the existence of both natural revelation and supernatural revelation, defining that God 'can be known with certainty' by the natural light of human reason from created things, thereby excluding fideism and traditionalism. It went on to affirm the need for revelation, not only so that supernatural mysteries above human reason can be known, but also so that divine truths accessible to human reason can be known even after the Fall 'by everyone with facility, with firm certitude, and with no admixture of error' (*Dei Filius* 2; Tanner 806, DH 3005). Supernatural revelation was given to man not simply so that he can obtain knowledge of revealed truths but so that he can participate in the divine goods that completely surpass the understanding of the human mind.

The council reiterated Trent's affirmations that supernatural revelation is contained 'in the written books and in the unwritten traditions which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself; or, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have been handed down by the apostles themselves, and have thus come to us' (*Dei Filius* 2; Tanner 806, DH 3006). The Books of the Old and New Testament are to be accepted as sacred and canonical not because they were affirmed by the Church nor because they contain revelation without error, but because they have God as their author. As for the interpretation of Scripture in matters of faith and morals, the true sense is that 'which Holy Mother Church has held and holds,' and no one is permitted to interpret sacred Scripture contrary to this sense or even contrary to the unanimous agreement of the fathers.

In chapter three, the council took up the proper response to supernatural revelation, i.e. divine faith. While the council reaffirmed Trent's teaching that no one is justified without faith, and that faith 'is the beginning of human salvation', it also dealt with a number of issues not explicitly taken up by Trent, such as the nature and object of faith. The council taught that faith is a supernatural virtue by which we, with the aid and inspiration of the grace of God, believe that the things revealed by Him are true. The council specified that the proper motive of faith is the authority of God Himself, 'who can neither err nor de-

ceive' (*Dei Filius* 3; Tanner 807, DH 3008). The council also specified that the object of faith includes all those things which are contained in supernatural revelation and which are proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary and universal teaching power, to be believed as divinely revealed.

The council affirmed the harmony of faith and reason by teaching that God has willed external proofs of His revelation such as miracles and prophecies. Moreover, God not only instituted the Church but provided it with 'manifest marks of His institution so that it may be recognized by all as the guardian and teacher of the revealed word'. The council further taught that to the Catholic Church alone belong all those things that have been (p. 646) divinely arranged for the evident credibility of the Christian faith. On account of her propagation, exceptional holiness, 'inexhaustible fruitfulness in everything that is good', catholic unity, and invincible stability, the Church herself is a very great and perpetual motive of credibility and witness to her own divine institution (*Dei Filius* 3; Tanner 807–8, DH 3013).

In chapter four the council took up the relationship between faith and reason and reaffirmed that there are two orders of knowledge that are distinct. The first order is that of divine faith and the second, lower order is that of reason. In addition to things to which natural reason can attain, there are also mysteries in the proper sense, that is, things which, had they not been divinely revealed, could not be known to mankind. Furthermore, the Church has a competence over the human sciences in so far as the Church has the authority to proscribe their theories if they appear to contradict revelation. Because revelation is founded on God's own knowledge of Himself, the divinely revealed mysteries are more certain to man than the human sciences, which are founded on the principles of human reason, which is limited and subject to error. Finally, the council rejected any notion of progress in human knowledge that could give a new sense to dogma that is different from the one definitively proposed by the Church in the past.

Pastor Aeternus

On 21 January 1870 the initial schema of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (*De ecclesia*) was distributed to the council fathers. This schema covered nearly the whole of Catholic ecclesiology with one significant lacuna: the issue of papal infallibility. Later in January 1870 a number of bishops submitted petitions to the pope, requesting that the question of papal infallibility be considered. Pius IX accepted their proposal, and a new chapter on infallibility for insertion in *De ecclesia* was distributed on 6 March 1870. A number of bishops found this addition unsatisfactory, for they feared that given the large number of thorny theological issues in *De ecclesia* and the impending war between France and Prussia, there might not be time to discuss and promulgate the schema. So these bishops, led by Henry Manning (1808–92) and Ignaz von Senestrey of Regensburg (1818–1906), petitioned Pius IX to create a new, shorter dogmatic constitution dealing only with the issues of the pope's primacy of jurisdiction and his infallibility.

This new schema, *Pastor aeternus*, on papal primacy and infallibility, was circulated on 9 May and most of the subsequent debate centred on the fourth chapter, which dealt with papal infallibility. Partially in an attempt to quell the controversy over the issue of papal infallibility, Bishop Vincent Gasser (1809–79) delivered a *Relatio* officially explaining what was intended by the proposed decree. On 13 July a preliminary vote was taken on the entire draft. Of the 601 fathers present, 451 voted *placet*, sixty-two voted *placet juxta modum*, and eighty-eight voted *non placet*. On 14 July, Pope Pius IX ordered that the phrase 'not because of the consent of the Church' (*ex sese, non autem ex consensus Ecclesiae*) be inserted in the text. The day before the final vote was taken, sixty-one bishops left the council in protest. Finally, in a public session on 18 July, the *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of* *(p. 647)* *Christ,* called by its incipit *Pastor aeternus*, was adopted by a vote of 433 to two. The two dissenting votes were cast by Bishop Riccio of Cajazzo and Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, both of whom then immediately accepted the definitions.

In the first chapter of *Pastor aeternus*, the council declared that Peter held a primacy not only of honour but of jurisdiction over the Apostles and that his primacy was conferred on him 'immediately and directly' by Christ (*Pastor aeternus* 1; Tanner 812, DH 3053). By doing this, the council wished to exclude definitively certain Gallican and conciliarist theories which asserted that Peter's jurisdiction was given immediately to the Church and then delegated to Peter by the Church. The second chapter affirms that this primacy 'will endure without interruption in the Church' in the successors of St Peter. In the third chapter, the council defined that the Bishop of Rome's jurisdiction is 'the complete fullness of supreme power'. His jurisdiction is universal, ordinary, episcopal, and immediate 'over all the other Churches'. By 'supreme' the council intended that papal primacy is not subordinated to any other authority, including the college of bishops assembled in a council or dispersed throughout the world. By 'universal' the council intended that the pope's jurisdiction extended to all matters concerning the discipline and government of the whole Church. Papal jurisdiction is 'ordinary' rather than extraordinary; that is, it is not reserved for extraordinary events such as some great crisis but can be exercised at any time. The council was also clear that this jurisdiction is 'truly episcopal'. Finally, papal jurisdiction is 'immediate'; that is, the pope's rule does not need to be mediated by either a local or a national church. This entails that there is no appeal to some higher power such as an ecumenical council, nor is the supreme power of the Church made up of parts but exists in its fullness in the successor of Peter.

In the debates leading up to the decree's promulgation, the fourth chapter was the most controversial since a number of neo-Gallicans objected to what they thought was the imposition of one school of thought on the entire Church. In the face of this opposition, the council asserted that its definition was not merely the view of one school but 'a dogma revealed by God', which entails that it is irreformable and demands the assent of faith like other revealed truths. The gift of papal infallibility was given to the Church in order to 'reverently guard and faithfully explain' revelation and not to teach 'new doctrine'. This is

necessary to protect Christ's flock from 'the poisonous bait of error and be nourished by the food of heavenly doctrine' (*Pator aeternus* 4; Tanner 815–6, DH 3071).

The council identified four conditions necessary for the pope to speak *ex cathedra*, a technical phrase that means that the pope is speaking with the authority of the supreme teacher of all Christians. First, the pope must be speaking as the supreme teacher of all Christians and not simply as a theologian, the Bishop of Rome, or the Patriarch of the West. Second, the pope must intend to bind 'the universal Church'. Therefore, doctrinal decrees that bind only a local church, an individual, or a group are not infallible. Third, the council also noted that infallibility is restricted to occasions when the pope intends to 'define' a doctrine of faith or morals. Gasser explained that the word 'define' was intended to convey that the pope 'directly and definitively pronounces his sentence about a doctrine which concerns faith or morals so that each one of the faithful can be certain of the mind of the Roman Pontiff' (Gasser et al. 2008: 92). The consequence of this is that only papal (p. 648) 'definitions' are infallible; all supporting material to a definition, such as theological arguments, illustrating examples, or pious exhortations, are not infallible. Fourth, the subject matter, also known as the object of infallibility, must be a 'doctrine concerning faith or morals'. Vatican I affirmed that when the pope infallibly defines a matter of faith, this is 'to be held (*tenendam*) by the universal Church'. The council used the technical term *tenendam* rather than *credendam* (to be believed) in its definition of papal infallibility precisely in order not to restrict the object of infallibility merely to revealed truths. The use of the term *credendam* would have implied that the object of infallibility was restricted to revealed truth since only revealed truth requires the assent of faith. This intention is made clear by Gasser's *Relatio*, which explained that the council intended to state that the pope is infallible in teaching not only revealed truths but also those non-revealed truths without which the deposit of faith cannot be 'preserved and expounded' (Gasser 2008: 79).

Finally, the council defined that the papal 'definitions' which meet these conditions are 'irreformable of themselves, not because of the consent of the Church' (*ex sese, non autem ex consensus Ecclesiae*) (*Pastor aeternus* 4; Tanner 816, DH 3074). This phrase introduced by Pius IX not only completely and definitively excluded the remnants of the conciliarist and Gallican heresies, which sought to subordinate the pope's authority to its reception by some portion of the Church such as the episcopate or the body of believers, but it was also a definitive rejection of anti-dogmatic liberalism. The dogmatic value of definitions *ex cathedra* is that they are in themselves irreformable. The term 'irreformable' means that the doctrine cannot be transformed or metamorphosed into a new doctrine with another meaning. The council was clear that the doctrine of faith which God revealed has not been handed down as a philosophic invention to be perfected by the human mind. Instead, the council taught that 'the meaning of its sacred dogmas is to perpetually retained, which Holy Mother Church has once declared; and there must never be deviation from that meaning under the specious ground and title of a more profound understanding'. The council then quoted St Vincent of Lerins, who maintained that doctrine

must remain ‘with the same sense and the same understanding’, even when there is doctrinal development (*Dei Filius* 4; Tanner 809, DH 3020).

Close of the Council

On 19 July 1870, Napoleon III declared war on Prussia and the Franco-Prussian war began. Napoleon III, therefore, had to withdraw his troops protecting the pope. On 20 September, Victor Emmanuel’s troops entered Rome through the Porta Pia, and the pope became a prisoner in the Vatican. On 20 October, Pius IX promulgated the bull, *Postquam Dei munere*, which suspended the council indefinitely.

For a small minority, *Pastor aeternus* was simply too much; appealing to the works of Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger (1799–1890), the Old Catholics formed as a heretical (p. 649) sect that remains with us to this day. *Pastor aeternus* also proved difficult for some Catholics to accept, and even John Henry Newman, in his correspondence, counselled Catholics that they could suspend their assent to *Pastor aeternus* under the assumption that there were legitimate questions about the validity of the council. Despite the personal difficulties that *Pastor aeternus* proved for a minority of bishops who had left the council prior to the vote, all submitted to the contents of the two dogmatic constitutions.

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The CouncilS of Trent and Vatican I

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Thomism 1870–1963

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Abstract and Keywords

Thomism acquired the status of the Church's official philosophy as a result of Vatican I, Aeterni Patris, and the modernist crisis. Much excellent metaphysics was written; even the XXIV Theses are less bad than are commonly believed. Thomists wrote sound defences of realism against idealism. The study of Aquinas ranged from the metaphysical to the historical to the aesthetic. There were naturally many different interpretations of Thomism. A grave problem with the imposition of Thomism as official philosophy was that the officials confused their interpretation with Thomism itself. Thomists got involved in politics, some as authoritarians and others as liberals. The Thomist debate about Christian philosophy decided whether it would survive in the universities.

Keywords: Thomas Aquinas, philosophy, Leo XIII, neo-Thomism, Gilson

La Grande Famille des 'Thomistes'

WHY was 'Catholics know their faith' a commonplace between 1870 and 1955? Seminary formation in philosophy and theology had to be Thomistic and bishops required their clergy to address the entire catechism in the course of a year's homilies. Dominican teaching sisters who abjured their charges that the 'body is the temple of the Holy Ghost' could tie the Pauline adage (1 Cor. 6.19) to Thomas's '*ens et bonum convertuntur*' ('being and goodness are interchangeable'). A Catholic's appreciation of the nature of the Church, the sacraments, and ethics was shaped by Thomistic definitions. Étienne Gilson defined a member of the 'Thomist family' as one 'who does not like to believe what he can know, and who never pretends to know what can be but believed and yet a man whose faith and knowledge grow into an organic unity because they spring from the same divine source' (Gilson 1939: 83–84). The 'great ' "Thomist" family' (Gilson 1960a: 116), the Thomist intelligentsia, overflowed into a well-catechized Church. Accordingly, this chapter considers first some of the key members of the family and the events—such as Vatican

I and the modernist crisis—that shaped their work. As the chapter unfolds more thematic sections discuss constant features of Thomism and Thomist debate during this period.

The *Pater familias* of modern Thomism was Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903), author of *Aeterni Patris* (1879), which described Aquinas as the best, because he was the most inclusive, Christian philosopher. Leo's 'brothers' were two Jesuits, Matteo Liberatore (1810–1892), who helped him with *Aeterni Patris* and Joseph Kleutgen (1811–1883), who contributed to the Vatican I constitution *De fide Catholica* and to *Aeterni Patris*. Kleutgen gave modern Thomism its anti-idealist orientation.

The French took up the baton of Thomistic 'realism' with gusto. Count Domet de Vorges (1829–1910) commented that 'neither the senses nor the intellect knows; it is the individual man who knows by means of the senses and the intellect (de Vorges 1892: 197). The French Dominicans were rebuilt after the French Revolution by Jean-Baptiste (p. 654) Dominique Lacordaire on the maxim that 'The doctrine of St Thomas is the sap which, running in the veins of the Order, has conserved it in its original strength. Someone who has not studied it in depth can be Dominican in his heart, but not in his mind' (Lacordaire 1899: 217). Édouard Hugon OP (1867–1929) assisted in the foundation of the Angelicum University in Rome, in 1909. He wrote a six-volume *Cursus philosophiae thomisticae* ('*A Course in Thomistic Philosophy*') for students. In the midst of the modernist crisis, Ambroise Gardeil OP (1859–1931) calmly used Thomas to show against the caricatures of Alfred Loisy and George Tyrell that, although it is neither produced by subjective experience nor parachuted from heaven, revelation is both interior and *given* (*Le donné révélé et la théologie*, 1910). He wrote about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the experience of the indwelling Trinity. He followed John of St Thomas in treating this experience as immediate, preconceptual, and non-discursive.

Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP (1877–1964) was the Angelicum Professor of Mystical and Ascetic Theology, following John of St Thomas in composing copious Thomistic commentaries. His treatises on mysticism such as *Les trois âges de la vie intérieure* (1938) claim that experience of the Trinity is supradiscursive, but mediated by the gift of filial charity. Ordinary believers have this experience. Garrigou's philosophical writings, such as *God: His Existence and his Nature* and (1939) *Le Sens commun* (1909) are a Thomistic analogue to Edumund Husserl's *Logical Investigations* (1900). Garrigou's disciples included the much-loved 'folk' Thomist, Jacques Maritain (1882–1973). Maritain's *The Degrees of Knowledge* (1932) evaluates the 'orders' of knowledge in terms of their degree of abstraction from matter: metaphysics is superior to mathematics and to physics because its objects 'not only can be *conceived* without matter, but can … *exist* without it … such as God and pure spirits, or which may equally exist in material and immaterial things, such as substance, quality, act and potency, beauty and goodness' (Maritain, 1932: 46). In 1923 Maritain called Thomas the 'apostle for modern times'. He drew from the Thomist corpus and its commentaries ideas relevant to modernity. Taught by Garrigou and influenced by Gardeil, Marie-Dominique Chenu OP (1895–1990) moved from research on Thomas's notion of contemplation to communing with the thinking of the historical Thomas in order to see its transhistorical verity. Chenu's *Introduction à l'étude de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (1950)

remains a classic (translated as Chenu 1964). Chenu owed much to Étienne Gilson (1884–1978), who was the outstanding Thomist historian of the twentieth century and, therefore, an original Thomist thinker. Gilson's most influential historical work was *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (Gifford Lectures, 1931–1932) and his enduring philosophical books include *L'être et l'essence* (1948).

Amongst German speakers, Joseph Gredt (1863–1940) produced a textbook, the *Elementa philosophiae Aristotelico-Thomisticae* (1899–1901). Martin Grabmann (d. 1949) humanized and temporalized the saint in *Thomas von Aquin: Persönlichkeit und Gedankenwelt* (1912). Both very different works were reprinted many times. Husserl's assistant Edith Stein (1891–1942) was converted from phenomenological realism to Catholicism in 1922. The Jesuit Erich Przywara encouraged Stein to translate Thomas's (p. 655) *De Veritate* into German. After entering the Carmelites in 1933, she composed *Endliches und ewiges Sein* (*Finite and Eternal Being*) in conversation with Przywara's 1923 text *Analogia entis* (Przywara 2014) and citing Gredt. Like Maritain and Garrigou but advertently, she combined a partially phenomenological Thomism with love of the mysticism of St John of the Cross. She was the only Jewish Thomist of the period, leaving *The Science of the Cross* unfinished, in her Dutch convent when deported to Auschwitz in 1942 (on Stein see MacIntyre (2007)).

Beginning with courage in 1934, Josef Pieper (1904–1997) wrote studies of all the cardinal and theological virtues, hinging *On Hope* (1935). He wrote his *Guide* to Aquinas in 1939. In 1947, Pieper observed that:

> … the capacity to wonder is among man's greatest gifts. To Aquinas it even appeared to offer proof that man could only find peace and rest in the contemplation of God; and conversely, because man's mind is ordained to knowledge of the first cause of the world, he is capable of wonder. … Aquinas held that man's first experience of wonder sets his feet on the ladder that leads up to the beatific vision … the truth that human nature is intended for no less an end is revealed in the fact that we are capable of experiencing the wonder of the creation, or quite simply that we are capable of wonder
>
> (Pieper 1952: 103).

Pieper's 1948 text *Mußе und Kult* (translated as *Leisure: the Basis of Culture* in 1952) argues that contemplation springs from cultic worship.

From 1882, the Belgian University of Louvain boasted a chair of Thomist Philosophy and Desiré Mercier was its first incumbent. The Louvain school founded Thomism in the empirical sciences, especially psychology. Its outstanding proponent was Canon Fernand von Steenberghen (1904–1993). Charles de Koninck (1906–1965) left Belgium for Canada, where the Laval school took the 'Aristotelian' in 'Aristotelico-Thomism' literally, establishing the truth of Thomas's thought on the foundation of his physics.

United by its preference for understanding the faith, the '*grande famille "thomiste"* ' was divided on the relative weight it gave to faith or to reason. This division was a bond of kinship, for each family member believed that the grounds he proposed were those by which objective truth is safeguarded. By rooting Thomism in logic (Garrigou), rational psychology (Louvain), intuition of existence (Maritain), or historical revelation (Gardeil, Chenu, Gilson, and Pieper), each argued, Thomas's insights were best established. Aware that truth was what mattered, non-doctrinaire readers could disregard familial quarrels and learn from most of them. The Dominican Order had a dual mission: *praedicantes et docentes ex abundantia et plenitudine contemplationis*—to be preachers and teachers from the abundance and fullness of contemplation. From the Roman clerical manuals to the Trinitarian mysticism, the metaphysical disputes and the historical narratives, Thomism of this period conceptualizes its objects so as to make Catholic philosophy and theology the means of contemplating the being of God. It allows us to 'see' truths of epic proportion.

(p. 656) The family excelled in ecclesiology. Louis Billot SJ (1846–1931) wrote manuals on *De verbo incarnate* and *De Ecclesia*. The Swiss Dominican Charles Journet (1891–1975), Maritain's theological 'cousin', created the journal *Nova et Vetera* in 1926 with his friend and composed *L' Église du verbe incarné: essai de théologie spéculative* (1951–1955) explaining how the uncreated grace of the Spirit generates in the body of Christ a 'mutual affective circumincession of the members of the Church, one in another'. Pius XI's *Studiorem ducem* (1923) declared that seminarians, clergy, and 'all Christian people' can learn from Thomas, and they did.

Vatican I (1870)

Chapter I of Vatican I's constitution *De fide Catholica* asserts that there is one God, 'simple and unchangeable spiritual substance' who created 'the world' 'by an absolutely free plan', bringing about 'from nothing the twofold created order … the spiritual and the bodily, the angelic and the earthly, and thereafter the human which is … common to both since it is composed of body and spirit'. Early twentieth-century Thomist metaphysics is an extension of this pronouncement, which envisages reality from the standpoint of the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* and tosses that gauntlet at pantheistic idealism:

> God can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason: *ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made*. It was, however, pleasing to his wisdom and goodness to reveal himself and the eternal laws of his will to the human race by another, and that a supernatural, way. … *God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son*
>
> (*De fide* 2).

The way in which reason is said to operate is Thomas's Aristotelian philosophical method, an inference from external realities achieves certainty that God exists. Reasoning and revelation are aligned in a Thomistic way. *De Fide* set the pattern for modern appropriation of a medieval philosophy and theology by designating it as the armoury with which to tackle the contemporary foes of rationalism and agnosticism. It affirms that:

> Even though faith is above reason, there can never be any real disagreement between faith and reason, since it is the same God who reveals the mysteries … and who has endowed the human mind with the light of reason … Not only can faith and reason never be at odds … but they mutually support each other, for … right reason established the foundations of the faith and, illuminated by its light, develops the science of divine things; … hand, faith delivers reason from errors and protects it and furnishes it with knowledge of many kinds
>
> (*De fide* 4).

(p. 657) Leo XIII (1878–1903)

Giacchino Pecci was converted to Thomism as a seminarian at the Roman College. As bishop of Perugia, he created the Academy of St Thomas, putting his brother Giuseppe and the Dominican Tommaso Zigliara in charge. On assuming the papacy in 1878 Leo gave both men cardinal's hats and powers. He moved the Academy to Rome and replaced Cartesian seminary textbooks with Thomistic ones. *Aeterni Patris* (1879) was his first encyclical. It is a mandate for restoring Christian philosophy by reviving Thomism. It inspired the creation of Thomist seats of learning from Louvain's Institute of Philosophy to St Michael's College in Toronto (instituted in 1929 with Gilson at its head). The 'Leonine' edition of Thomas's works was initiated and is still being perfected. Laurence Shapcote OP translated the *Summa Theologiae* into English and his 1920 rendition is in use today, on the internet. A plethora of Thomist journals sprang up. The *Revue Thomiste*, founded at St Maximin in 1893 by the Dominicans of Toulouse, St Dominic's first preaching redoubt and the resting place of Thomas's relics, was the purest of these.

Charles Péguy (1873–1914) described St Thomas's destiny with poetic exaggeration: '*Un grand docteur considéré, célébré, consacré, dénombré. Enterré*'. *Aeterni Patris* intended a resurrection. Subtitled, 'On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy', the encyclical begins dialectically by noting a problem: wide 'consent' to 'false' philosophical 'conclusions concerning divine and human things' has produced evident 'evils' in 'public and private life' (*Aeterni Patris* 1). Human beings are shielded from error by faith. So, '[t]hose … who to the study of philosophy unite obedience to the Christian faith, are philosophizing in the best possible way' (*Aeterni Patris* 2). There follows a history of Christian philosophy, from the first Apologists, to Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origin, whose 'volumes … contain a wealth of knowledge tending to the … advance of natural truths', and Augustine who 'wrested the palm' (*Aeterni Patris* 11–13). After John of Damascus, Anselm, and Bonaventure, the summit is attained in Thomas Aquinas. For in his thought, the 'doctrines

of these illustrious men' are 'collected together and cemented' (*Aeterni Patris* 17). Thomas's special merit is the close collaboration of faith and reason which he achieved (*Aeterni Patris* 18).

Down to 1963, Thomism was effectively treated as the *sole* philosophy of the Church. *Aeterni Patris* gives a practical rationale for this monolithic adherence to a single doctor, who had ingested the 'scattered members' of the Patristic and Scholastic patrimony (*Aeterni Patris* 17). Once men began 'to philosophize without respect for faith' 'systems of philosophy multiplied', and, with 'conclusions differing and clashing one with another', people were given to doubt that truth was achievable. Even 'Catholic philosophers … chose rather to build up a new edifice than to strengthen and complete the old by aid of the new'. Pluralism and sheer innovation were 'detriment[al] to the science of truth' (*Aeterni Patris* 24): this was the practical judgement of the 'Magna Carta' of neo-Thomism. Leo went on to issue a body of Thomistic teaching about human freedom (*Libertas praestantissimum*, 1888), the state (*Immortale Dei*, 1885), socialism (*Quod* *(p. 658)* *apostolici muneris*, 1878), citizenship (*Sapientiae christianae*, 1890), and, the resounding encyclical on the 'Rights and Duties of Capital and of Labour', *Rerum novarum* (1890). As his concentration on the society and politics indicates, Leo restored Thomism in the hope that it could speak in a straight and simple voice about human nature for the common good of human society. For Leo, Thomism was common sense under the guiding star of faith.

The Modernist Crisis (1903–1914)

Defensive action against 'modernism' built Thomism into a rampart. In his encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* (1907) Pius X took the field against the modernist heresies of 'agnosticism'. which limits 'human reasoning … to … phenomena', the reduction of dogmas to 'experiences' (*Pascendi* 6), theological subjectivism, and historical relativism, the application of 'the laws of evolution' to 'dogma, Church, worship, the Books we revere as sacred, even to faith itself' (*Pascendi* 22). Expecting 'scholastic philosophy' to exorcise theological error, Pius X 'prescribe[d] that the scholasticism of "the Angelic Doctor" ' become 'the basis of the sacred sciences' (*Pascendi* 26): in 'seminaries' where Leo's exhortations 'have been neglected let Bishops impose them' (*Pascendi* 45). Non-Thomist professors were exfiltrated from seminaries into pastoral work. In *Doctoris angelis* (1914) Pius X made Thomist pedagogy canonically binding on ecclesiastical schools. The *Summa Theologiae* must be their primary textbook.

Authors and their books were purged. Books secular and religious were placed on the Index, such as the 'evolutionist' writings of the Jewish philosopher Henri Bergson, who had converted many French students from materialism, including Maritain. The Holy Office 'indexed' the works of the Bergsonian College de France Professor Edouard le Roy from 1907 until 1931. Scores were settled: the Oratorian Lucien Laberthonniere was silenced from 1913 until his death in 1931, for critically probing the Maurrasian politics of a powerful Jesuit, Descoqs. The lay philosopher Maurice Blondel whose *L'Action* oriented elec-

tric currents in modern thinking towards God, lived in fear of the Index. Blondel was threatened by Garrigou-Lagrange with a 'very hard or a very long purgatory' unless he abjured his definition of truth as '*adaequatio realis vitae et mentis*' ('a real correspondence between intellect and life') in favour of Thomas's '*adaequatio rei et intellectus*' ('correspondence between reality and the intellect').

From 1918, canon law required that clerical education be methodologically and doctrinally Thomistic. One knew what that meant because Gregorian Professor Guido Mattiussi had condensed this metaphysics into 'XXIV Theses' published by Cardinal Lorenzelli and endorsed in Pope Pius X's *Postquam sanctissimus* (for the text see XXIV Theses). The 'XXIV Theses' began with the division of being into 'potency and act' (I), and, against Suarez's aberrations, affirmed that, outside God, 'essence and existence' are 'really distinct principles' in created natures (III), including 'spiritual' creatures (angels), in whose simple essence there 'remains … composition (p. 659) of essence with existence' (VII). Thomists considered Augustinian, Cartesian, and Ontologist paths to God as subjectivist. So 'Thesis XXII' explains the right way to demonstrate God:

> We cannot perceive God's existence by an immediate intuition, nor can we demonstrate his existence a priori, but we demonstrate his existence a posteriori, that is, by the things which have been made, with a line of argument that leads from effects to cause; namely from things which are moved to the principle of their motion; from the progression of … things … from causes … to the first uncaused cause; from corruptible things … to the … necessary being; from … diminished perfections of existing … to that which is … most fully being; … from the order of the universe to the separate intellect that has ordered and arranged things.

Only God can create (XXIV). Ratified by the Congregation of Studies in 1914, the 'XXIV Theses' contain nothing to dismay a Thomist. Even idiosyncratic Thomisms, such as those of Przywara and Stein, are in line with the Theses. Great non-Thomist Christian metaphysicians, such as Augustine, Leibniz, or Hans Urs von Balthasar could concur in the content of the Theses. But micromanaging the metaphysics of the universal Church is a dirty business, practised by fallen men not unfallen angels. When that police work was pursued by the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith over fifty years, with deviation from 'Thomist Orthodoxy' taken as evidence of modernism, the question arose, *quis custodet ipsos custodes*?

The Knowledge of God

Post-Vatican I, Catholicism was confident that God's existence is not only an object of belief but also of certain knowledge. For Garrigou, the evidence comes down to 'first principles': our minds have 'a knowledge of *intelligible* being', the logical laws of ontology. Le Roy's Bergsonianism and Hume's empiricism function for this philosophy like materialistic psychologism does for Husserl's *Logical Investigations*: as the foil against which to prove that thinking cannot logically doubt or misconceive its own rules. 'The primary principles of reasoning are necessary and universal, and' Garrigou states, 'cannot be the

subject of doubt. How to explain this is an impossibility for Empiricism … science demands this necessity and this universality'. The demonstration works on a formal level at which actual material objects are bracketed (Husserl) or abstracted (Garrigou). As Garrigou says:

> The intellect considers, in sensible things, intelligible being … without actually considering the sensible qualities; just as with words it is not the arrangement of the letters that arrests the attention, but the meaning of the words. … Hence, all reasoning starts first from intuition and ends again in this intellectual intuition by a reduction of all things to first principles (Ia, q. 79, a. 8)
>
> (Garrigou-Lagrange 1939: 114).

(p. 660) The intuition of intelligible being, not repeated experiences, compels everyone, 'except the Positivists when they begin to philosophize' to accept the 'principle of causality'. 'The Agnostic' who denies that we intuit such principles must doubt their correllories 'especially the validity of the principle of non-contradiction … founded on the notion of being'. The only 'facts' in Garrigou's demonstration are these laws: 'This primordial evidence is a *fact attested by the reason*'. The 'foundation of the certitudes of our intellect concerning the objectivity of first principles is … God': but to call this evidence for God's existence, as the Ontologist Rosmini and the French Thomist Pierre Rousselot did, 'is wrong, in that it defines the intellect not in its relation to being, but … to the divine'. A further, correlative intellectual principle completes the demonstration that our ability to think scientifically requires God: 'The principle of sufficient reason … will show us … that whatever is multiple (composite) and changing, cannot have a sufficient reason for its existence in itself, but … this reason must be sought in a being which is pure identity, pure being, pure act' (Garrigou-Lagrange 1939: 113, 118, 114, 146, 180). This way of proving God, which adds many layers to the 'Five Ways', was standard amongst Thomists between 1870 and 1963. It would appeal to a positivist who must concede he can think and who values science. If Kant, who valued Newtonian physics, had given arguments for the existence of God, this is how he would have gone about it.

Even after Einstein, not everyone could be a Thomist die-hard, insisting, as Gilson came to do, that Thomas does not argue from a 'principle of causality' but from causes in living entities. As Gilson had it:

> each proof is based on the empirical observation of a fact, because no existence can be inferred save by starting from some other existence. … There is motion, there are reciprocal actions, beings that are born and die, things more or less perfect, and there is order in things. And it is because all this *is* that we can affirm that its cause exists
>
> (Gilson 1961: 76).

These proofs showed faith is not subjective, they also conditioned the concept of God proposed. Thomas Merton said that the 'one big concept' he 'got out of' *The Spirit of Me-*

dieval Philosophy ‘was to revolutionize my life’. The concept was *aseity*: ‘the power of a being to exist absolutely in virtue of itself’. *The Spirit* shows how God’s ‘I am that I am’ (Exodus 3.14–15) taught ‘Christian philosophy’ that ‘the proper name of God is Being and that … this name denotes His very essence. There is but one God and this God is Being’ (Gilson 1936: 50). Merton wrote:

> I had never had an adequate notion of what Christians meant by God. I had … taken it for granted that the God in whom religious people believe . … was a noisy … dramatic and passionate character … the objectification of all their own desires … one cause of my profound satisfaction with which I now read was that God had been vindicated in my own mind. There is in every intellect a natural exigency for a true concept of God: we are born with the thirst to know and to see Him … many people (p. 661) are … ‘atheists’ … because they are repelled … by statements about God made in imaginary and metaphorical terms. … What a relief … to discover not only that no idea of ours, let alone any image, could adequately represent God but also that we should not allow ourselves to be satisfied with any such knowledge of Him
>
> (Merton 1948: 189).

Thus Thomist reasoning opened up conversions and mystical vocations.

The idea that God is knowable by analogy mattered too. Maritain spoke of Thomas’s ‘central intuition of analogy’ (Maritain 1938: 202). The English Dominican John O’Connor inspired Chesterton’s *Father Brown*, the detective who solves crimes by rational inference or analogy to his own fallen heart. Gardeil builds his argument that revealed dogma can encapsulate divine truths on the principle that human rational judgements can do so, using analogy: ‘the method of analogy … consists in targeting a being that is not directly accessible by means of another being that one knows directly and which has a relation of effective proportionality with the first being’ (Gardeil 1910: 121). Referring to Cajetan’s commentary on *De ente et essentia*, this typifies Thomist responses to modernist agnosticism.

Edith Stein read Exodus 3.14 (‘I am that I am’), and commented that Scripture does not say ‘I am He who exists’: ‘One hardly dares interpret these words by using other words’. Rather, the proportional analogy is to the divine *I*: to ‘*being in person*.’ God is ‘evident[ly]’ a person, because ‘[o]nly a person can *create*,’ or *freely* call into being, and the universe’s ‘purposiveness’ indicates a ‘person’ as its ‘author’: ‘Reason and freedom … are the … marks of a personality’. We know experientially and ontologically what it is to be a finite ‘I’:

> while the being of the I is separated from divine being by an infinite distance, it … —owing to the fact that it is a … person—bears a closer resemblance to the divine being than anything else … If we remove from the being of the I everything that is non-being, this will make it possible for us to conceive—albeit only analogically—

> of divine being. … The relationship between the divine ‘I am’ and the multiplicity of finite existents is the primordial *analogia entis*
>
> (Stein 2002: 342–344, 346).

The Historical Thomas

In the nineteenth century, how to understand temporally distant authors and their writings became a hermeneutical question. It did not worry early neo-Thomists. Disregarding the author and the structure and sound of his writings, they boiled Thomas into textbooks which bear only the remotest analogy to the *Summas* or even to the Aristotle commentaries. The seminary manuals are arranged pedagogically: Gredt’s *Elementa philosophiae aristotelico-thomisticae* (1921) begins in logic and builds up to philosophy of nature, psychology, and culminates in ontology.

(p. 662) The early twentieth century witnessed the inception of historical studies of Thomas, like that of Grabmann (1912; trans. as Grabmann 1928). In France, Pierre Mandonnet OP at Saulchoir, and Gilson, in the first three editions of *Le thomisme* (initially published in1919. See Gilson 1927; trans. as Gilson 2002) began to portray the currents in thirteenth-century thought with which Thomas was conversing, such as Augustinianism and Latin Averroism, or extreme Aristotelianism. Van Steenberghen put his hand to the plough. The figure to whom less scientific historians, such as Maritain, were devoted was the visionary saint of the fourteenth-century hagiographies, written by people who knew Thomas (sound hermeneutical principle).

Once it was noted that Thomistic theses were the expression of a personality, a breach was cut in the anti-experientialist ramparts of neo-Thomism. Pius XI’s *Studiorum ducem*, issued on the 600th anniversary of Thomas’s canonization in 1923, repeats the Thomistic injunctions of Leo XIII and Pius X. It also connects the wisdom of Thomas’s writings to his moral bearing, particularly his humility and chastity. Thomas taught that ‘Life comes before learning: for life leads to the knowledge of truth’ and ‘learning such sublime things, the beauty of which is a ravishing ecstasy’ is ‘most practical’ (*Studiorum* 2). Thomas had not only ‘[t]he wisdom which is acquired by human effort’ but also a ‘kind of wisdom which … judges divine things in virtue of a certain connaturality with them. This wisdom is a gift of the Holy Ghost … and through it a man becomes perfect in divine things, not only by learning but also by experiencing divine things’ (*Studiorum* 7, citing *ST* II–II, q.45, a.1, as 2,; 2). Thomas’s greatness flows from his graced experience of God: ‘For just as a man cannot really be said to know some distant country if his acquaintance is confined … to a description of it … but must have dwelt in it … so nobody can attain to an intimate knowledge of God by mere scientific investigation, unless he also dwells in the most intimate association with God’ (*Studiorum* 12). Pius’s encyclical exhorts, ‘*Ita Thomae*’—‘Go to Thomas’ (*Studiorum* 28).

Mystical under Gardeil, and historical under Mandonnet, Le Saulchoir became both when Chenu took its reins. Chenu became regent of the Studium in 1932. His historical writings connected the inventiveness of the *Summas* to the social and architectural ferment of the Gothic era. Chenu's manifesto, *Une école de théologie: le Saulchoir*, tackled hermeneutics theologically: Thomas's thinking flows from spiritual experience, and is understood by experiencing revealed reality in the way Thomas did. Thomas's philosophy 'cannot be defined as an adhesion to propositions and theses, but as a communion with organic principles and primary perceptions, of whose inspiration and methods the propositions and theses are the consequence' (Chenu 1985: 165). Gilson had shown in *Le Thomisme* that Thomas uses philosophical *principles* and a theological *order*; his arguments are oriented by theology (Gilson 1927: 22). Chenu did not separate the reasoning and the theological illumination, as 'husk' and 'core' of Thomas's thought. He compared them to the dual, divine–human nature of Christ:

> The beautiful form which is saint Thomas' intellectuality is not a pure form; it was born, it lived, it attained its perfection, in a matter, and thus in a time, in a climate, in (p. 663) a context, in a body. It is good Thomism to enter into the history of Thomas' thought, seeing his soul united to his body
>
> (Chenu 1985: 173).

In 1942, Chenu's pamphlet was put on the Index and he was silenced. The issue was not truth (outside the political ramifications—Garrigou, his chief tormentor, was a vocal supporter of Vichy, Chenu a leftist), but a delicate hermeneutical one, of how exactly a historical author and his writings transcends his time. Chenu affirms that Thomas's writings are true both historically and timelessly, both then and now: 'It is not in deracination from its time that the timelessness of a work appears; we do not attain eternity by expelling time from our lives, but by assuming it with all its content, toward eternity'. That Christological metaphor did not touch Garrigou, for whom '[n]o sensible image … is an expression of *being* … This image can never be anything … but a representation of phenomena in juxtaposition, and not of their intimate raison d'être' (Garrigou 1939: 129).

For Pieper, the 'historical timelessness' of Thomas and his work consists in an 'exemplary' achievement that could only have been wrought in one time and place. Thomas synthesized the energies of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century voluntary poverty movement, heretical at its supernaturalist extremes, with the dynamism of Aristotelianism, heretical at its worldly extremes. What is 'paradigmatic' in Thomas is 'the assimilative powers which … insists that everything that is, "belongs" … both the Bible and the metaphysics of Aristotle'. Thomas 'unit[ed] this hearty worldliness' of Aristotelianism 'with the radicality of the evangelical spirit' (Pieper 1991: 22, 48).

Settling the Manichees

The biography everyone read was Chesterton's *Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox* (1933). Chesterton didn't know Thomas, but he put his finger on the spontaneous appeal of Thomism: 'that *positive* position of his mind, … filled and soaked as with sunshine with the warmth and wonder of created things'. Thomas 'may specially be called St. Thomas of the Creator' (Chesterton 1933: 118–119). Chesterton put this perception into a story:

> [Thomas] was invited to the court of King Louis IX of France … Somehow they steered that reluctant bulk of reflection to a seat in the royal banquet hall; and … they forgot all about the large fat Italian in their midst, and … he forgot all about them. There had long been no word or motion in that huge heap of black and white weeds, like motley in mourning, which marked him as a mendicant friar … and contrasted with all the colours and patterns and quarterings of that … freshest dawn of chivalry and heraldry. … And then suddenly the goblets leapt and rattled on the board and the great table shook, for the friar had brought down his huge fist like a club of stone, (p. 664) and … cried out in a strong voice, but like a man in the grip of a dream, 'And *that* will settle the Manichees!' … It was not for nothing that he was still brooding, even in the white court of St. Louis, upon the dark cloud of the Manichees. … what he wanted for the world … was to strike a blow and settle the Manichees
>
> (Chesterton 1933: 97–102).

Here Thomas exuberantly reappears as a Leonine gauntlet ('like the sun he heated the world with the warmth of his virtues and filled it with the splendor of his teaching', *Aeterni Patris*, 17). Chesterton saw that the relevance of Thomas's Aristotelianism is its propounding the inherent goodness of reality, the signature of its good Creator. When Thomas argues that goodness is an aspect of being, or that the transcendentals of 'good' and 'being' translate into one another, he is, Gilson says, elaborating 'the metaphysics of the Exodus', the metaphysics in which God names himself as Being. Hence, 'the essential result of a Christian philosophy is a deeply considered affirmation of a reality and goodness intrinsic to nature' (Gilson 1936: 93–94 and 420). The words of the paradoxical journalist and the Gifford lecturer struck a chord in the 1930s, which had its own 'Manichees'. The Utopianisms of the time, eugenicism, National Socialism, and communism, were councils of despair. In 1942 Theodor Haecker observed 'Thomas had no thorn in the flesh', adding 'that explains why he is so strange and foreign to modern man' (Haecker 1950: 178–179). This 'alien' quality enabled him, Pieper argues to 'justif[y] his worldliness by the theology of creation, and by the strictly "theological" theology of the Incarnation' (Pieper 1991: 24–26). Populist Thomism, the philosophy of the Catholic magazines and confessionals, asserted its own theses, and 'to be is good' was the first.

Vorzeit versus *Neuzeit*

Kleutgen had written a five-volume encomium of *Die Theologie der Vorzeit* (‘The Theology of Antiquity’, 1853–1874) and a-two volume *Die Philosophie der Vorzeit* (1860 and 1863). He adversely contrasted the philosophy of the *Neuzeit*, the ‘new times’ of post-Enlightenment, post-Cartesian, and idealist thinking with that of the *Vorzeit*, the ‘old-time’ speculations of the ancients and medievals, especially Aquinas. It would be a rare Thomist book published between 1870 and 1960 that advanced no critical insights about modern philosophies. For Kleutgen thinking is not primarily a constructive *work*, what Kant called a ‘herculean labour’, but, more originally, *receptive*, a contemplating of reality. Garrigou tackles the representative doctrine of perception, which prevents both empiricists and rationalists from seeing that mental contents are not what we know, but *that by which* we know reality, its *intentional* idea: ‘Idealism has’ he observes, a ‘materialistic conception of the idea, which it regards as a material portrait … like the effigy stamped on a coin’ (Garrigou 1939: 141).

(p. 665) According to Maritain, ‘Whether they be neo-Kantians, or neo-positivists, idealists, Bergsonians, logistics, pragmatists, or neo-Spinozists, or neo-mystics, one ancient sin works in the roots of all modern philosophies—the old error of *nominalism*. … What is the cause of this incurable nominalism? … with a taste for the real they lack the sense of being’ (Maritain 1959: 1–2). Gilson addressed the substitutes under which modern thinkers, the ‘undertakers of metaphysics’ have attempted to bury philosophy, arguing that the undertaking was invariably a failure, since human beings are indefatigably metaphysical (Gilson 1938: 312).

In *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* (1986), Gilson criticized fellow Thomists for trying to prove ‘reflexively’, on *epistemic grounds*, that epistemological realism holds good: stick one finger into the Cartesian machine, he abjured, and it will drag you the length of its path. Maritain’s response admits history into philosophy: it’s true there is no explicit self-reflexive turn in Thomas’s writings, but, he asserted, ‘idealism has played a necessary historical part’ in teaching Thomists to draw out new, implicit truths from the Master (Gilson 1959: 87).

From its inception, with Liberatore (who had converted to Thomism during the 1848 Italian revolution) and with Leo XIII, neo-Thomism contended against modern liberalism, or what came to be called ‘social modernism’ under Pius X. Neo-Thomism was political and so compelled to make practical historical judgements. Unless one advertently took history into account, one would merely canonize what were taken to be the political structures of Thomas’s time and were in reality those of the pre-Revolutionary *ancien regime*. Garrigou produced an edition of Thomas’s *De Monarchia* in 1926. Prominent European Thomists looked for political support to embryonic fascist movements, such as the Action Française. Did these adults really believe that medieval Christendom could be recreated or were they just using Thomas’s texts to legitimate outcomes they imagined would serve the Church’s interests? As against this, in 1941 Journet showed in *Nova et Vetera* that it is

a distortion of Thomas's writings to use them to justify acquiescence in anti-Semitism and the Vichy statutes against the Jews.

After Pius XI condemned the far-right French political movement Action Française in 1927, Maritain shed the chrysalis of his anti-modern politics. In *Integral Humanism*, lectures delivered in Spain in 1934, he argued that 'Christendom' 'can be realised at different epochs of the world's history not *univocally*' (not as a material portrait of the Middle Ages) 'but *analogously*'. Urging that the medieval ideal of the 'Holy Empire' was corrupting German-Catholic political thought, Maritain defended a 'new humanism' whose 'guiding star … will not be that of God's *holy empire over all things*, but rather that of the *holy freedom* of the creature' (Maritain 1938: 131, 139, 156). Despite accusations of liberalism from Thomists including Charles de Koninck and Garrigou, *Integral Humanism* inspired the generation of priests who, as bishops, promulgated Vatican II's *Dignitatis humanae*. Maritain influenced the document's acceptance of freedom. The recognition that Thomism could not create a political *Vorzeit* came with appreciating the difference between practical and speculative judgements.

(p. 666) The Art and Virtue of Thomism

Maritain used aesthetic Thomism to cast the fisherman's net amongst artists and writers, drawing many into the Catholic fold, and enabling Catholic novelists such as Flannery O'Connor to articulate their purposes (she called herself a 'hillbilly Thomist': O'Connor 1979: 82). Thomas's writings have an 'austere beauty', Pieper finds. He observes in Thomas's sentences a 'kinship to the last bars of a Bach organ fugue'. Though his linguistic material was not vernacular, the Latin he worked in was alive in the liturgy. Writing in a 'natural and living language' Thomas 'did not "employ a terminology" '. He used diverse words to denote the same realities. For Thomas, as for Aristotle 'the decisive factor was linguistic usage, *usus*'. He held that *nominibus utendum est ut plures utundur* (Pieper 1952: 109–113). Filaments of reality stick to the commonplace use of language.

So when Thomas states that 'the beautiful is called that which pleases when seen', the 'is called' signifies, not that this is a sociological generalization, but that it is a commonsense definition of beauty. Maritain argued that:

> beauty delights the mind … because beauty is … a … perfection in the proportion of things to the mind. Hence the three conditions assigned to it by St. Thomas: integrity because the mind likes being; proportion because the mind likes order and likes unity; … above all brightness or clarity, because the mind likes light and intelligibility
>
> (Maritain 1943: 24).

Beauty is a transcendental, an analogous concept whose scope is as wide as being and goodness, and which as such is 'properly predicable only of God' (Maritain 1943: 30). God creates in beauty: 'Consider the Liturgy', Maritain said, with reference to the Missal of

Pius V, ‘the transcendent supereminent type of Christian art-forms. The Spirit of God in Person fashioned it, for His own pleasure’ (Maritain 1943: 24, 30, 71).

Artistic making requires, not speculative knowledge of an already-existing entity, but practical knowledge, the ‘wise blood’ kind of knowledge which steers our moral lives. Here volition is the key: in ethics, its artefact is the moral personality; in craftsmanship, its object is an artefact. Practical knowledge requires ‘congruence’ or ‘connaturality’ between what the maker wills to *make* and the beauty at which it aims. Connaturality requires *love* for beauty. The English sculptor Eric Gill reproduced Maritain’s portrayal of artistic craftsmanship in *Beauty Looks After Herself* (1933). Maritain’s *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* defends the non-representative strain in modern art, arguing that, ‘poetry’ or the ‘creativity of the spirit, in its longing for beauty’ is the goal of craftsmanship (Maritain 1981: 54).

Gilson also liked abstract art. His philosophy of art attends to the materials used by the different arts, the potentials with which musicians, painters, choreographers, and poets engage. Painting uses a static medium, oil on canvas or wood. Gilson’s rationale for the value of the non-representative in art is that painting captures, not the essence of things, but their motionless, dynamic act of existing. Drawing on Thomas’s maxim (p. 667) that ‘To act is … to communicate that by which the acting being is in act’, Gilson argues that artists transfer their own act of existing to their works. An analogate to God’s act of creation, this communication of being by a creature is somewhat sexual: ‘To create life, a man needs a woman. To create the perfection of beauty … the man must also *be* the woman’: it was by ‘absorb[ing] the femininity of Beatrice’ that Dante populated the *Commedia* with life. The first of the XXIV Theses reappears in Gilson’s comparison of the troubadours’ appreciation that the ‘well-spring of delight is man’s love for woman’ to the Scholastics definition of beauty as ‘that which pleases when seen’: it follows that a poet becomes a maker by ‘absorbing the spiritual essence of a woman’ (Gilson 1953: 80–81, 172, 79).

Quaedam Perennis Philosophia

In 1932 a debate was held in Paris; on the podium, Maritain and Gilson defended the motion that there is a ‘Christian philosophy’ while Émile Bréhier and Léon Brunschvicg opposed it. The debate continued offstage for years, seemingly one more internal Thomist argument. Many neo-Thomists opposed the position of Maritain and Gilson. Van Steenberghen argued that:

> The direct influence of Christianity is purely of the psychological order, and *limits itself to setting the Christian philosopher in the best conditions for elaborating*—not a Christian philosophy, which is a meaningless term—but a *true philosophy*
>
> (Van Steenberghen 1933: 546–547).

One can easily see the significance of Gilson's position vis-à-vis the non-believers. He was showing, historically, that the thinking of patristic figures such as Augustine, was not, as was commonly held at the time, 'just neo-Platonism' and that the Scholastic notion of God should not be conflated with that of the eighteenth-century Deists. But when Gilson hammered on, for decades, and the matter seemed to turn on arcane or at least technical questions about whether the 'preambles' to faith, the proofs of God's existence, and the elaboration of God's nature, belonged to revelation, the 'revealable' or purely to reason, the topic appears of little import. It was important. By 1963, as Vatican I's influence waned, the future character of Catholic university education was still an open question. The hostility to the notion of 'Christian philosophy' in American philosophy departments in the 1950s shows how it would be answered. If 'Christian philosophy' boiled down at its best only to 'true philosophy', then an institution would be equally served by hiring a good and renowned philosopher as a Christian one. If Thomas's arguments were characterized as wholly separable from their theological orientation, Catholic philosophy would be in the hands of those whose deepest 'desire' was 'to be philosophically respectable in a … hostile and secularist world' (Wilhelmsen in Gilson 1986: 13).

(p. 668) Gilson argued that though in theory, reason and faith are distinct, there has in historical fact been a 'Christian exercise of reason' (Gilson 1936: 12). Taught by revelation that the world is God *created*, their philosophy was imprinted with realism. Other Thomists worried that the conjunction 'Christian philosophy' would strip philosophy of its autonomy and dissolve it into theology. For Gilson, the argument came down to the unique collusion of faith and reason which enabled Thomas to achieve a uniquely *existential* realism: 'The theology of St. Thomas is a philosopher's theology; his philosophy is a theologian's' (Gilson 1961: 8).

Garrigou believed that common-sense conceptualist realism is *the* traditional philosophy, which Leibniz termed *quaedam perennis philosophia* ('a certain perennial philosophy'). This was, he says, the philosophy of the Ancients, Plato and Aristotle. It breaks down outside true religion: 'The philosophy which is no longer religious does not remain indifferent … It first works against the God of faith, then against the God of reason; … finally it attacks the absolute character of the moral law'. Garrigou grasped that '[p]hilosophy, as a science distinct from the positive sciences, cannot live long without religion' (Garrigou 1922: 84, 92–94). How did the 'Ancients' get their philosophy?

Pieper claimed they got it from revelation. He argued that philosophy tries to understand being as a whole, and that it 'receive[s] its impulse and impetus from a prior and uncritically accepted interpretation of the world as a whole'. Hence, 'long *before* the appearance of philosophy on the historical scene, from time immemorial, man has always had a given interpretation of the world'. It was bestowed on the philosopher by 'tradition': 'Plato and Aristotle' 'accepted' 'a "traditional" interpretation of the world' 'as their starting point' (Pieper 1952: 117–118). Plato took the myths to be god-given, his *donné révélé*. Thomas, Pieper argues, 'would term this Platonic interpretation of myths theology in the strict sense. For he … allow[ed] that revelation … had been vouchsafed to men outside Holy Scripture. … "revelation has been made to many pagans"—this was an opinion that

Thomas pronounced many times' (Pieper 1962: 146). Pieper also argues that philosophy becomes lifeless and infertile without the shocking recognition that reality is questionable and mysterious. Referring to Garrigou's *The Sense of Mystery and the Clair-Obscur of the Spirit*, Pieper says, 'One of the great thinkers of our time, whose thought is inspired by Aquinas, has written that the characteristic of Christian philosophy … is … that … it is inspired by the sense of mystery' (Pieper 1952: 127). In 1963, Pieper dedicated a book to tradition, noting that it is what unites all peoples: the acceptance of tradition, found in every culture of the world, can only be rationally justified if tradition records an original revelation. On this revelation, Thomist contemplative philosophy is founded.

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Thomism From 1962–2012

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Abstract and Keywords

There are good reasons for thinking that Thomism (inspired by Thomas Aquinas), or at least a certain kind of Thomism, was undercut by the Second Vatican Council. Thomist categories are used sparingly and Thomist metaphysics hardly features. And yet a number of factors have enabled Thomism to renew itself in the post-conciliar Church. The persistence of institutions within which Thomism is taught, the vitality of recent historical studies on Thomas Aquinas, the renewal of a specifically theological interest in Thomas, and the persistent utility of Thomas in the exploration of the relationship between faith and reason have enabled Thomism to flourish.

Keywords: Thomas Aquinas, Thomism, reason, philosophy, analytical Thomism, neoplatonism

THE Second Vatican Council, which opened in 1962, sounded the death knell for Thomism, or at least, for a certain kind of Thomism. The first break happened on the day when the Council Fathers rejected the preparatory schemas drawn up by a theological commission, which was largely an expression of the Roman Thomism of the Holy Office. Later the Council texts made few enough references to Thomas Aquinas. Of course, Aquinas was not absent from the Council chamber. The Fathers had all, more or less, been formed in a theological and philosophical framework which claimed to be Thomist, and several of the masters of twentieth-century Thomism (Marie-Dominique Chenu, Yves Congar, Bernard Lonergan, to name a few) were among the Council's 'thinking heads'. The emphasis in *Gaudium et spes* on the just autonomy and proper value of earthly realities shows an indisputable Thomist vein. Yet on at least two points, Thomism appears to have been out of synch with the Council's way of thinking. First of all, the technical vocabulary and scholastic style which St Thomas's disciples generally use hardly corresponded to the desire to address the modern world in a language it would understand. Second, the decisive importance that Vatican II gave to the category of the history of salvation, being aware of developments in contemporary theology, would appear to disqualify a Thomism which some link to a 'sacred metaphysics' entirely closed off from the historical dimension. In fact, the great absence from the Council—as much if not more so than Thomism—was philosophy and particularly metaphysics, as two Polish philosophers

inspired by Thomism, J. Kalinowski (1916–2000) and S. Swiezawski (1907–2004), noted with a certain anxiety in their *La philosophie à l'heure du Concile* (1965). And yet the consequences of the sidelining of the classical metaphysical structure of Catholic theology have been considerable. Claude Geffré (1926–2017) noted in 1975:

> Many people reject the systematic construction of theological knowledge because the metaphysical mediation of long ago has become uncertain. Within Catholicism, (p. 672) the ancient theological synthesis more or less founded on Thomas Aquinas has collapsed, and has been replaced by nothing
>
> (Geffré 1975: 68).

But above all it was the post-conciliar turbulence that proved fatal to Thomism, to the extent of bringing about its (almost) institutional shipwrecking. Having played the role of the rampart of orthodoxy and the tool of normalization of Catholic thought during a modernist crisis whose trauma lasted until the Council, in short, having been the 'official thought' of the pre-conciliar Church, Thomism could only be one of the first victims when the floodgates of liberalization opened following the Council. Thomist exclusivity was denounced in favour of philosophical and theological pluralism. 'Woe to the man with a single book! Woe to the Church with only one Doctor!' pontificated Cardinal Léger during the Council. In 1972, a pamphlet by another Canadian denounced the neo-Thomist project as a purely ideological enterprise serving papal power (Thibault 1972). Thomism's collapse was rapid. The introduction of a general bibliography for Thomism between 1940 and 1978 draws up a devastating report.

> In fact, since Vatican Council II, there has been a noticeable decrease of interest in Saint Thomas on the part of Roman Catholic philosophers and theologians. […] This decline is particulary evident in seminaries […] The much-discussed opening of the windows of Roman Catholic scholarship has not only admitted valuable new concepts, it has also permitted much traditional knowledge (including some of the 'golden wisdom' of Saint Thomas) to fly away.
>
> (Miethe and Bourke 1980: xv)

Institutions that had been the jewels of Thomism—even the most open, such as the Dominican institute at Le Saulchoir—ended their work (1969), while others distanced themselves from their Thomist origins. All this contributed to nourishing a feeling of failure among the 'survivors', which Étienne Gilson expressed bitterly towards the end of his life as 'ramblings amid the ruins'.

Yet Thomism has not been lost with all hands. *Non tollitur sed mutatur* (‘it has been changed, not taken away’). In the course of a lengthy purgatory, it has renewed itself and adapted to a new ecclesial and theological context, so that at the start of the twenty-first century, it is playing a discreet but real role in the intellectual life of the Catholic Church. This renaissance has been made possible by a number of factors:

1. The first is the permanence—even during difficult periods—of certain institutional bastions of Thomism, and the flowering among their disciples of the works of the great Thomists of the twentieth century.
2. A second factor is the exponential development of studies of the history of doctrine on St Thomas, his sources, and his medieval context. Of course, historical studies on Thomas Aquinas must be distinguished from Thomism as a doctrinal, theological, and/or philosophical project; but nonetheless the results of these historical labours, to the extent that they renew the understanding of the thought of (p. 673) St Thomas, have had repercussions on the Thomist project itself. This application of the historical method to St Thomas is not unconnected to the *ressourcement* movement of twentieth-century theology. It translates into the desire to rediscover the ‘Thomas of history’, the ‘Thomas of Thomas’, beyond the ‘Thomist’ Thomas constructed by the interpretative layers of the ‘commentators’. The increasing use of the distinction between ‘Thomistic’ and ‘Thomasian’ is an indication of this. For a long time the use of the historical method encountered—and continues to do so—a strong resistance in certains areas of neo-scholasticism, obsessed by the spectre of historical relativism or fearing that the efforts employed in historical research would conceal the speculative exhaustion of Thomism and its flight from contemporary questions. Be that as it may, one of the results of historical research has been to shed light on the originality of St Thomas’s philosophical synthesis, even while Aquinas’s philosophical doctrines also inspire those contemporary philosophers who are more anxious to make them confront modern thought than to contextualize them.
3. But above all, the historical method has contributed to the major phenomenon of the last fifty years—the ‘retheologizing’ of Thomism. A better awareness of the formally theological intention of St Thomas has renewed the reading of his work and enabled its relevance to contemporary theological debate to be shown.
4. Yet this highly influential phenomenon sometimes makes us forget that one of the strengths of Thomism lies in the balance of the relationship it establishes between faith and reason, and particularly between theology and a philosophy which must remain independent at the same time as being open to faith, and which deserves to be developed for itself.

Bastions and Legacies

Serious as it was, the post-conciliar upheavel did not tear down all the institutional bastions of Thomism. The Pontifical Academy of St Thomas in Rome and other establishments, such as the International Society of St Thomas Aquinas (SITA), founded in 1976 in

the enthusiasm following the celebrations in 1974 of the seven hundredth anniversary of Aquinas's death, organized large-scale international events that bore witness to Thomism's vitality. The Dominican university of the Angelicum continues to offer Thomist-inspired teaching (e.g. A. Patfoort [b. 1912]; D. Mongillo [1928–2005]; C. Morerod [b. 1961]). When the *Bulletin thomiste*, run from Le Saulchoir, ended in 1965, the Angelicum produced *Rassegna di Letteratura Tomistica*, run by the Belgian Dominican C. Vansteenkiste (1910–97), which listed works relating to Thomism between 1965 and 1992. In the same way, despite a decrease in readership due to the closing of many centres of ecclesiastical formation, several specialist journals offer a platform for Thomist studies. There are, for instance, the *Revue thomiste* from Toulouse, the (p. 674) *Angelicum* from Rome, *The Thomist* from Washington, *Nova et vetera* from Fribourg in Switzerland, and *Sapientia* from Buenos Aires, among others.

The Order of Preachers was particularly concerned by Thomism's crisis because reference to St Thomas is a basic element of the Dominican identity. Despite profound questioning, however, the order has never stopped maintaining a privileged link with Thomist studies and, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, a lively Thomism is the matrix for intellectual formation in several of the order's provinces, including Toulouse, Poland, and St Joseph (Washington) in the US.

Despite the feeling of failure which constrained them in the 1960s and 1970s, the masters of Thomism in the twentieth century are not lacking in heirs. After Vatican II, when Paul VI granted him the 'message of the Council to thinkers', the work of Jacques Maritain (1882–1973), in constant dialogue with his friend Charles Journet (1891–1975), took on a more theological "…tone, not only with the…" very controversial *Paysan de la Garonne* (1966), but also with *De la grâce et de l'humanité de Jésus* (1967), and *De l'Église du Christ, La personne de l'Église et son personnel* (1970). While Maritain's political influence declined, especially with the rise of liberation theologies in Latin America, his philosophical reflection continued to inspire those around him, such as Georges Cottier (1922–2016), and disciples.

The work of the medievalist Étienne Gilson (1884–1978) benefited from wide reocgnition in the academic world, even though contemporary medievalism seeks to define itself in reaction to Gilson's historiographic model. However Gilson has few philosophical heirs in Europe, even though his works on the history of metaphysics played a certain role in contemporary debates on ontotheology. It is quite different in North America. Starting from the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies in Toronto, several of Gilson's disciples have continued his work, preaching the good news of 'existential Thomism'. These include A. Maurer (1915–2008), A. C. Pegis (d. 1978), and J. Owens (1908–2005), among others. The *Center for Thomistic Studies*, founded at the University of St Thomas in Houston, Texas in 1975, defends similar work inspired by V. J. Bourke (1907–98) and J. F. X. Knasas (b. 1948).

Among the masters of Thomism who pursued work that had been recognized before Vatican II after the Council, one may mention—without being exhaustive—C. Fabro (1911–

95), who deepened dialogue with modern thought, but reacted against a theological development of which he disapproved; J. de Finance (1904–2000), and also at Louvain, F. van Steenberghen (1904–993). J-H. Nicolas's (1910–2001) magisterial *Synthèse dogmatique* testifies to the permanence of a strong Dominican Thomist tradition at Fribourg in Switzerland. In Spain, the Thomist school in Barcelona continued its work under F. Canals Vidal (1922–2009).

One sign of the ongoing interest in Thomism is the increase of scholarly resources that give us better access to the work of Thomas himself. On hold for a number of years, the critical edition of the works of St Thomas led by the Leonine Commission started up again with the publication of *Expositio super Iob ad litteram* (1965) by A. Dondaine (1898–1987). There then followed editions of several major texts, including the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (1970–76), the *Quaestiones disputatae de malo* (1982), (p. 675) commentaries on the works of Aristotle—whose publication is mostly due to the erudite work of R-A. Gauthier (1913–99)—and the *Quaestiones quodlibetales* (1996). These editions, with their scholarly prefaces, have renewed knowledge of Thomas's work.

During the 1970s, the Italian Jesuit R. Busa (1913–2011) completed the *Index thomisticus*, the first entire computerized concordance of Thomas's corpus. A CD-Rom version was made available in 1989, and the *Index thomisticus* was put online in 2005 on the *Corpus thomisticum* website. In addition, translations of the works of Aquinas in various national languages are increasing. This is partly explained by the ongoing interest in Thomism held by an educated public of somewhat traditional tendencies. They see in it the intellectual armour of militant Catholicism.

Thomas Aquinas Among Medievalists and Philosophers

Since P. Mandonnet (1858–1936) and M. Grabmann (1875–1949), the application of the historical method to the study of St Thomas has established privileged links between Thomism and medieval studies. For a long time the Thomist doctrinal project stimulated and directed research into the history of medieval doctrine. But for the last few decades medieval studies have become more secular, and have cut the umbilical cord which connected them to their Thomist frame. This legitimate move to independence has translated, in particular, into a critique of the historiographical teleologism stigmatized as 'Thomas-centrism'. The history of medieval thought does not orbit St Thomas, even if he is a significant reference point.

Nonetheless, during the last fifty years, historical studies on St Thomas have borne good fruit. The progress made in understanding Aquinas's biography and the historical environment in which he lived culminated in 1993 with J-P. Torrell's (b. 1927) reference work, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin, Sa personne, son œuvre* (2015), which replaced J. Weisheipl's *Friar Thomas Aquinas*, originally published in 1974 (1983). Historical studies have also enabled the many sources of Thomas's thought, and their relative influence on

its internal development, to be more precisely established. So today we are much more aware of the originality of Thomas's personal philosophical synthesis, which he drew up at the service of his project of *intellectus fidei*. The question of Thomas's relationship to Aristotle is key here.

Gilson and his disciples, refusing to reduce Thomism to 'baptized Aristotelianism', suggested that 'St Thomas' philosophy is *not* Aristotle's. The language is the same, the technical demonstration is similar, but the content of the teaching is different' (Gilson 1967: 32). As a philosophy of the act of being, Thomism goes beyond Aristotelianism as a philosophy of form and substance, even while taking it on board. This has been made possible by Revelation, particularly by the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and by approaching God as *Ipsum Esse* ('Being Itself'). However, the Christian uniqueness of (p. 676) the alliance between God and the being, which is so central in Gilson's 'metaphysics of Exodus', has been contested, since it seems to be already present in certain forms of pagan neoplatonism.

In fact, one of the principal achievements of contemporary research is its emphasis on a certain neoplatonic influence on St Thomas. Without even questioning his rejection of Platonic extrinsicism, and the correlated affirmation of nature's proper consistence, which are at the very heart of Aristotelianism, St Thomas critically took on board many Platonic and neoplatonic aspects of thought, to the extent that W. J. Hankey has been able to suggest a new reading of the treatise on God in the *Summa theologiae* in the light of neoplatonic sources (Hankey 1987). For instance, the concept of participation structures Thomas's approach to the relationship between God and the world. St Thomas's philosophical thought thus appears to be a superior synthesis of Platonism and Aristotelianism in the light of the metaphysical demands which are internal to the Christian faith.

Neoplatonism influenced Thomas through many routes. He was in constant 'dialogue' with Jewish and Muslim philosophers, but also with the writings of Denys the Areopagite (Burrell 1986, 1993; O'Rourke 1992). The question of Thomas's reception of Denys also nourishes the debate around apophatic theology and thus how appropriate it is to locate St Thomas in the Heideggerian history of ontotheology (Humbrecht 2006; *Revue Thomiste* 1995).

Nonetheless, reacting against 'existentialist' Thomism and against the passion for mining the neoplatonic seam, 'Aristotelian Thomism' reaffirms Thomas's basic preference for Aristotle. Consequently this school reckons it is more important than ever to draw up a philosophy of nature from the school of Aristotle as read by Thomas, in order to be able to enter into metaphysics in a realistic epistemologial manner (not 'from above,' in other words, from Revelation), and to nourish dialogue with modern science. This Aristotelian current can be found in 'Laval Thomism' (C. de Koninck [1906–65]) and the 'River Forest' school, where authors such as the Dominicans J. A. Weisheipl (1923–84), W. A. Wallace (1918–2015), and B. Ashley (1915–2013) distinguished themselves in the history of science and the dialogue between science and religious faith.

Other forms of philosophical Thomism have been characterized by an openness to modern philosophy. ‘Transcendental Thomism’, in the Jesuit (and Blondelian) tradition of J. Maréchal (1878–1944), K. Rahner (1904–84), or B. Lonergan (1904–84), attempted to reconcile Thomism with the modern approach to knowledge shaped by Kantian criticism. According to McCool, because transcendental Thomism relativizes conceptual knowledge in favour of the wider dynamism of the mind, it signalled the death of (neo-)Thomism as such, by opening the way to an implacable pluralism of doctrines. In other words, it was the Thomism of the exit from Thomism (McCool 1989). The Lublin Thomist school, with M. A. Krapiec (1921–2008), is closest to existential Thomism, and it sought to enrich realist metaphysics through the influence of Husserl’s phenomenology. This was one of the principal sources for the philosophical work of Karol Wojtyla.

(p. 677) Finally, analytical Thomism developed in the English-speaking world (see Pouivet 2014; Kerr 2002; Paterson and Pugh 2006). Catholic disciples of Wittgenstein (such as Elizabeth Anscombe [1919–2001], Peter Geach [1916–2013], and Anthony Kenny [b. 1931]) considered that the criticism Wittgenstein made of the internalism that was part of post-Cartesian philosophy of the mind makes more relevant St Thomas’s pre-modern realism. Thus John Haldane (b. 1954), the founder of the expression ‘analytical Thomism’, defends the identity between mind and world in a single act of knowledge against modern representationalism. Beyond the precise theses of analytical Thomism, whose initial interest gravitates towards philosophy of mind and ethics, the linguistic and analytical bent of philosophy in the Anglo-Saxon world has renewed interest in the argumentative style of Thomist philosophy, particularly in the field of philosophical theology (N. Kretzmann [(1928–98]).

The Renewal of Thomas’s Theology

Initially Thomist philosophy, which was less directly affected by the post-conciliar ecclesiastical turbulence, survived more easily than Thomist theology, whose fate seemed irreparably linked to the pre-conciliar period. However the most significant tendency of recent decades has been the rediscovery of the primacy of theology in St Thomas, and of the resources that his theology offers to contemporary theological thinking. This ‘retheologizing’ is presented as a reaction to the overdevelopment of the philosophical side that marked Leo XIII’s neo-scholastic project. It is evidenced first and foremost by a new attention to St Thomas as a reader of the Scriptures. In addition to examining Aquinas’s exegetical theories, his concrete practice as a commentator of the Scriptures is also analysed. The exemplary way in which he connects exegetical work and very scientific theological reflection are highlighted (Levering 2004; Levering and Dauphinais 2005 and 2012; Prügl 2005; Roszak and Vijgen 2015). On the one hand, Thomas’s exegesis is a complete exegesis. Convinced by the unity of truth, he never hesitated to shed light on the meaning of the Word of God from the metaphysical truths established elsewhere, or from later developments in the Tradition. On the other hand, for him Scripture was ‘the soul of theology’. It directed and determined all the work of speculative theology. The Utrecht *Thomas Instituut*, which, since its foundation in 1990 has held a major place in the study

of Thomist theology, emphasizes this essential presence of Scripture in Thomas's theology (Valkenberg 2000).

St Thomas read the Word of God in the Tradition. The patristic *ressourcement*, which was a twentieth-century battle-horse against Thomism, is paradoxically a marker of St Thomas himself, as is confirmed by the Thomas's theological works dedicated to the patristic sources themselves (Bataillon 1993; Dauphinais, David and Levering 2007). It goes without saying that research into Thomas's connections between Scripture and the Fathers has considerable ecumenical importance.

(p. 678) The attention paid to the relationship between St Thomas and the sources of Christian theology (Scripture, Fathers, Councils), and the belief that 'Thomas is now much better explained by what preceded him than by what followed him' (Torrell 2003: 191) reinforce today's rather general tendency to unhook St Thomas from a later Thomist tradition—that of the 'commentators'—accused of every wrong. But this strategy is simplistic and a more balanced appreciation of the Thomist tradition, based on rigorous study of the history of doctrine, is one of the major fields of work which contemporary Thomism offers.

Nonetheless, the way in which St Thomas himself conceived of the practice of theology corresponds poorly to the image of a rationalist, ahistorical, and hypothetical–deductive theology, to which Thomism has often been reduced (Narcisse 1997). In this context, certain sections of the *Summa theologiae*, which have been neglected for a long time, are being rediscovered for their theological interest. This is the case, for instance, for the questions on the life of Christ in the *Tertia Pars* (Torrell 1999). What is more, it appears that the strong metaphysical structuring of Thomas's theology is in no way opposed to the perspective of the history of salvation. On the contrary, it draws out its full intelligibility. The work of G. Emery (b. 1962) on St Thomas's Trinitarian theology attests to the profound unity of Thomas's thought which, particularly on the theme of divine mission, connects Trinitarian theology, the theology of creation, and the theology of the history of salvation in Jesus Christ (Emery 1995, 2010).

The changes in perspective due to a more theological reading of St Thomas are especially noticeable in the field of moral theology. Thanks in particular to the work of S-T. Pinckaers (1925–2008) and his disciples, St Thomas's moral theology appears to be an ethics of beatitude, in the tradition of Aristotle and, especially, St Augustine (Pinckaers 1995). The spiritual impulse that directs the human, body and soul, towards its concretely supernatural beatitude, is the driving force of all moral actions. Aquinas was thus at the polar opposite of a deontological moral theology based on pure obligation, which Pinckaers denounced as a harmful consequence of late-medieval volontarism and its ideas about a freedom of indifference, disconnected from the profound and theocentric dynamism of the spiritual nature. Deeply opposed to legalism, Thomas's moral theology is a virtue ethics. 'His interest is not in the rules we have to follow, but in the type of people we become' (Kerr 2002: 118). The art of virtuous discernment—in other words, prudence—plays a cardinal role here, as do virtues such as temperance and fortitude, which are

called to humanize and Christianize the psychosomatic forces which are the passions. In this way the renewal of Thomas's moral theology has encountered the more general recovery of interest in Aristotelian virtue ethics (A. McIntyre) but integrates it in a theological perspective (Cessario 2001). Thomas's moral theology, in fact, is Trinitarian. Christ appears as both the moral and the ontological pattern of our sanctifiction in the Spirit. A moral theology of a unique beatitude, which takes the form of deification, St Thomas's moral theology thus transcends the modern distinction between ethics and mysticism, making St Thomas, through his theology, a spiritual master (Torrell 2003).

(p. 679) Faith and Reason: the Return of Philosophy

The emphasis on the intrinsically theological dimension of the work of St Thomas has sometimes been over-determined by a 'supernatural' approach. Reacting against the separation which neo-Thomism established between the natural order of creation and the supernatural order of grace, with the risk of extrinsicism which this brought about, some have sought to blur, or at least to reassess the distinction between the two orders. The reading of St Thomas suggested by Henri de Lubac, around the question of the natural desire to see God, has been highly influential here (Bonino 2009). One of the consequences has been a certain devaluing of the philosophical dimension of Thomas's work, as though St Thomas may only be read as a theologian, and as though the project to draw up a Thomist philosophy based on his work were in itself a contamination from modern rationalism. A movement such as Radical Orthodoxy seeks to draw St Thomas towards this 'supernatural' perspective. The 'natural' or secular order can only be thought of correctly when starting from a specifically theological ontology whose keystone is the unifying theme of participation (Milbank and Pickstock 2000). For the 'Augustinian' Thomism, promoted, for example by T. Rowland, the idea of dialogue with liberal modernity on the supposedly neutral terrain of reason represents a formidable trap for authentic Christian thought (Rowland 2003).

But this 'pan-theologism' is out of step with the current insistence of the Church's Magisterium on the exemplary nature of St Thomas for his way of conceiving of the relationship between faith and reason, and grace and nature. In fact, for some twenty years, Thomism has been making a remarkable return in the teaching of the Magisterium. Of course, it has never been absent, as Paul VI's 1974 letter *Lumen ecclesiae* shows. In a similar way, from the beginning of his pontificate, John Paul II encouraged (existential) Thomism to pollinate the advances of contemporary philosophy in the fields of phenomenology or personalism. But several recent documents, while not reassessing theological pluralism, grant Thomism the best place. The exposition of the principles of Christian morality in the 1993 encyclical *Veritatis splendor* was largely inspired by St Thomas's moral teaching as it has been renewed by recent study. The same goes for the section on moral teaching in the 1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. But above all the 1998 encyclical *Fides et ratio* demonstrates the convergence between the Magisterium and Thomism, with regard to the need to articulate faith with an autonomous reason, marked by a metaphysical open-

ness to the universality of being. Thus the ‘retheologizing’ of Thomism must be accompanied by the establishment of a Thomist philosophy which has its own consistency.

Now free from being encumbered with the status of ‘official thinker’, Thomas Aquinas is today available to all. For some, he can only be a matter of historical studies. For others, he is a philosopher of high standing, whose rigorous arguments maintain a certain (p. 680) contemporary relevance. For others still, he is a privileged witness to the theological tradition, and constitutes an obligatory rite of passage in the teaching of theology. Finally, for others—those who claim to be ‘Thomist’—the theological and philosophical principles described by St Thomas and even better understood thanks to the study of the history of doctrine, contain a universal value which enables a living Thomism to deal fruitfully with the most contemporary of problems.

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Ressourcement and Theologies of Communion

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter describes the contribution of a group of (initially French) theologians known for promoting the work of ressourcement: renewal of the Church through recovery of biblical and Early Christian sources. The work of Henri de Lubac and Yves Congar receives particular attention (although the contributions of others, such as Marie-Dominique Chenu and Jean Cardinal Daniélou are also discussed), and the group as a whole is placed against the background of the social, political, and ecclesiastical context of France in the first half of the twentieth century. This chapter highlights the centrality of ressourcement theologians to the work of Vatican II. The final sections of the essay focus on one of the most important consequences of their work at the council, the development of accounts of the Church as 'communion'.

Keywords: ressourcement, communion, Church, Vatican II, Second Vatican Council, Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Jean Daniélou

THIS chapter provides an interpretative framework for understanding *ressourcement* and includes an outline of its philosophical foundations and a brief profile of its principal protagonists. It presents the movement's historical development and analyses its achievements from its nadir, following the publication of *Humani generis* (1950), to its zenith at the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the years between 1962 and 1965. The chapter also assesses how communion theology, an influential offshoot of *ressourcement*, provides an effective means for renewal and reform in the Catholic Church as well as new opportunities for ecumenism (Willebrands 1975). Perhaps it might be as well to remark at the outset that the history of *ressourcement* remains contentious (Daniélou 1946; Congar 1948; Aubert 1954). The *ressourcement* thinkers exercised a profound influence on French theology and society from 1930 to 1960 and beyond. They inspired a renaissance in twentieth-century Catholic thought and initiated a movement for renewal that contributed to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. The foremost exponents of *ressourcement* were principally, though not exclusively, leading French Dominicans and Jesuits of the faculties of Le Saulchoir (Paris) and Lyon-Fourvière, respectively. They included the Dominicans Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895–1990), Yves Congar (1904–95), Do-

minique Dubarle (1907–87), and Henri-Marie Féret (1904–92), and the Jesuits Jean Daniélou (1905–74), Henri de Lubac (1896–1991), Henri Bouillard (1908–81), and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–88) who left the Society of Jesus in 1950. The movement also encompassed Belgium and Germany.

(p. 684) *Ressourcement*: A Movement for Renewal in Contemporary Catholic Thought

Beginning with a historical analysis of *nouvelle théologie*, this chapter first offers an examination of the nature and genesis of *ressourcement* and considers its philosophical underpinnings, while also assessing its contribution to theological renewal and ecclesial reform in the twentieth century (for a fuller introduction see Flynn 2012; Fouilloux 1994). It should be noted at the outset that *nouvelle théologie* is a complex historical movement that emerged from the wider political, cultural, and intellectual milieux of twentieth-century France. A related question concerns that movement's connection with modernism (Loughlin 2012). Second, it seeks to elucidate the thorny question of terminology, the interpretation of which still engenders controversy in studies of *ressourcement* and *nouvelle théologie*. Third, it assesses the contribution of leading *ressourcement* theologians at Vatican II—one of the most important religious events of the twentieth century—and concludes by pointing to the movement's enduring relevance for the Christian Churches and modern society.

A great number of new initiatives enriched the life of the French Church during and after the Second World War (1939–45). Foremost among these was the movement for the reform of the liturgy. The liturgical changes inaugurated by Pope Pius X (1835–1914) inspired the liturgical renewal on the Continent and were also an inspiration for *ressourcement*. Equally important was the renewal of biblical studies that began in Germany in the course of the interwar period and spread progressively to the rest of the Catholic world. The biblical renewal and the liturgical movement were completed by a patristic rejuvenation (Bouyer 1947). The early part of the twentieth century also witnessed the renewal of ecclesiology and a new focus on the Church's missionary task (Congar 1966; de Lubac 1993). There were new missionary movements in France, including the Young Christian Worker/Young Christian Student movements, as well as the 'mission de France' (inspired by Godin and Daniel 1950).

In September 1946, Pope Pius XII (pontificate 1939–58), expressed his concerns regarding the *nouvelle théologie* to representatives of both the Dominicans and the Jesuits, warning against an attack on the fundamental tenets of Roman Catholic doctrine. Then in late November 1946, an unknown group of Jesuits published an anonymous and impassioned defence of *Sources chrétiennes* in the Jesuit periodical *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, thereby making a difficult situation worse (Anon. 1946). In an atmosphere of suspicion and controversy, *Humani generis* was published on 12 August 1950 (on the background and context of the texts, Guelluy 1986). At the height of the controversy, Congar and de Lubac rejected the term *nouvelle théologie*. Although no names had been men-

tioned in *Humani generis*, the Jesuit and Dominican superiors felt compelled to act. In February 1954, Congar was dismissed from his post at the Dominican theological (p. 685) school Le Saulchoir, together with his *confrères* Marie-Dominique Chenu, Féret, and Pierre Boisselot (on the programme instituted at Le Saulchoir see Chenu 1985 and Gray 2011). Among the French Jesuits, de Lubac was permanently removed from all lecturing duties and his books were withdrawn from Jesuit libraries (de Lubac 1993: 71, 74). His *confrères*, Henri Bouillard (1908–81) and Gaston Fessard (1897–1978), were temporarily exiled from the lecture theatre and were forbidden to publish, although Daniélou was allowed to remain at the Institut Catholique in Paris (Daley 2005).

Congar's most significant contribution to *ressourcement* is undoubtedly the *Unam Sanctam* series launched by *La Vie intellectuelle* in November 1935, which became a highly influential ecclesiological and ecumenical library of Éditions du Cerf, running to some seventy-seven volumes, which he believed prepared the way for Vatican II. Congar viewed his theology as an integral part of the council, a point he expressed succinctly as follows: 'All the things to which I gave special attention issued in the Council: ecclesiology, ecumenism, reform of the Church, the lay state, mission, ministries, collegiality, return to the sources and Tradition' (Congar 1981: 405–406; 2012: 141).

De Lubac's prodigious theological programme also directly affected the documents of Vatican II (Lubac 2007: 1.421–425; 2007a: 41–69). As Joseph Ratzinger (1927–), Pope Benedict XVI from 2005 to 2013, remarks: '[I]n all its comments about the Church [Vatican II] was moving precisely in the direction of de Lubac's thought' (Ratzinger 1987: 50). De Lubac was instrumental, with others, in the foundation of the *Théologie* series, a project of the Fourvière Jesuits, dedicated to the 'renewal of the Church'. But it was *Sources chrétiennes*, a bilingual collection published by Éditions du Cerf, under the general editorship of de Lubac and Daniélou, which was the crowning glory of the Fourvière Jesuits, as well as their greatest and most enduring contribution to *ressourcement* (Fouilloux 1994: 219). This project was inspired and elaborated between 1932 and 1937 by Victor Fontoynont, (d. 1958), who was the true founder of the collection (Lubac 1993: 94). Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the relevance and success of this venture, the principal aim of which was to provide high-quality translations of the Fathers in contemporary French, is the publication to date of over 500 volumes of Greek, Latin, and occasionally Syriac and Aramaic authors.

Benedict XVI, one of the last surviving theologians of the pre-Vatican II era, also contributed to *ressourcement*. He viewed *ressourcement* as a hermeneutic of continuity rather than as a rupture with the Church's past. Jared Wicks describes his role at Vatican II in precise terms: 'He helped on the Doctrinal Commission's revisions of *De ecclesia* and *De revelatione*; he assisted the Council's Commission on Missions in its early 1965 creation of what became Ch. I of *Ad gentes*; and he proposed in October 1965 a revision leading to new material in *Gaudium et spes* no. 10' (Wicks 2008; Ayres et al. 2012).

Turning to the question of the philosophical underpinnings of *ressourcement*, it may be stated that the *nouvelle théologie* attempted to reconnect nature and the supernatural so

as to overcome the harmful rupture between theology and life. Among the great precursors of *ressourcement*, Maurice Blondel (1861–1949), the acclaimed 'philosopher of action', is pre-eminent. Reference must also be made to Joseph Maréchal (1878–1944), Pierre Rousselot (1878–1915), and Étienne Gilson (1884–1978). Blondel's (p. 686) doctoral thesis remained his masterpiece and was published in Paris in 1893 as *L'Action. Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique*. His entire philosophical endeavour was an attempt to establish a correct relationship between secular philosophy and Christianity. While today Blondel is credited with pointing beyond secular reason, to his neo-Thomist contemporaries he was perceived as moving precisely in the direction of secularity.

De Lubac, Gaston Fessard (1897–1978), and others who came to form the vanguard of the *ressourcement* all entered the Jesuits in 1913 and effectively assumed responsibility for their own intellectual formation. As de Lubac wrote to Michael Sales: 'In our first year of philosophy at Jersey, Gaston Fessard and I quickly agreed … it was necessary to figure our first intellectual steps ourselves … It was thanks to Gilson that I came to a certain overall view of St Thomas' (Chantraine 2009: 137). The Fourvière Jesuits, profoundly marked by the experience of trench warfare, re-entered the Society of Jesus in 1919 in the wake of the modernist crisis (Fouilloux 2005: 261. Of the 841 Jesuits who served at the front, 164 died in action). They were drawn simultaneously to existentialism and to the thought of Blondel. Sales recounts how Blondel impacted on Fessard:

> In addition to the daily unconscionable reality of death and the overcrowding in the trenches with the millions of soldiers of his generation, he would soon after find in the philosophy of Maurice Blondel an inspiration and a philosophical method able to articulate the *science pratique* which he had lived until then.
>
> (Sales 1997: 10)

De Lubac also experienced the irresistable draw of Blondel's phenomenology: 'During my years of philosophy (1920–23) on Jersey, I had read with enthusiasm Maurice Blondel's *Action, Lettre* (on apologetics) and various other studies' (Lubac 1993: 18–19). Blondel's insistence on the organic relationship between nature and the supernatural profoundly influenced de Lubac's thought. For Boersma:

> Blondel's opposition both to what he called 'extrinsicism' (the neo-Thomist outside imposition of divine grace on the realm of nature) and to what he termed 'historicism' or 'immanentism' (the modernist and secular exclusion of any supernatural impact on historical cause and effect) provides the key to de Lubac's sacramental ontology.
>
> (Boersma 2009: 53)

Conway presents an incisive precis of Blondel's achievement: 'Through his treatment of action, Blondel recovered—even for philosophy in the positive tradition—the subjective, the personal, and the historical, not merely as categories of reflexive thought but as living

realities that always go beyond the determinations of explicit formulations' (Conway 2012: 70). Blondel's *Action* was read by the leading figures of the *ressourcement* generation. It may be noted that Congar also came under the spell of Blondel through his mentors Chenu and Ambroise Gardeil (1859–1931). Blondel's philosophy provided the basis for the dialectic of structure and life, a fundamental feature of Congar's ecclesiology.

(p. 687) The intellectual formation of the Fourvière Jesuits was critical to the future development of the *ressourcement* movement through its acceptance of the following four elements (Kirwan 2018):

(i) a necessary critique of neo-Thomism
(ii) a historical search for the authentic Tradition
(iii) Blondel's method of immanence
(iv) the development of social Catholicism.

There are two further points concerning the success of *ressourcement* that may be referred to briefly. First, it was thanks to Auguste Valensin (1879–1953) and Joseph Huby (1878–1948) that Blondel was introduced to the Jesuit Scholasticate of Lyon-Fourvière, located in Jersey, UK from 1901–26 (Fouilloux 1998: 174–181). Second, no account of twentieth-century *ressourcement* and communion theologies would be complete without reference to Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838) and the Roman Catholic School of Tübingen that introduced a principle of renewal into nineteenth-century theology with a conception of faith that integrates its historical, psychological, and pastoral dimensions. De Lubac gave the highest praise to Möhler's theological contribution, which he viewed as a model of balance and a 'wonderful synthesis'. In an interview given in 1975, Chenu, an important precursor of *ressourcement* theology, and perhaps the single most significant influence on Congar and his *confrères* at Le Saulchoir, states that he and Congar effected a rediscovery of Möhler (Chenu 1975: 55; Congar 1985: 495–503). Writing in 1970, Congar affirms the influence of Möhler: 'Möhler can even today be an animator (*éveilleur*). That is what he was for me for more than forty years' (Congar 1970: 50–51).

A Question of Terminology: *Ressourcement* or *nouvelle théologie*?

Ressourcement engendered controversy from its inception. An inevitable part of that controversy related to the vexed question of terminology. The word '*ressourcement*' was coined by the poet and social critic Charles Péguy (1873–1914) (Congar 1949: 1). The *ressourcement* project quickly became the subject of intense criticism from M-Michel Labourdette (Labourdette 1946; 1946a), as well as Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, who seems to have borrowed the phrase '*la nouvelle théologie*' to describe it (Garrigou-Lagrange 1946. The term was first used by Pietro Parente, secretary to the Holy Office, in 'Nuove tendenze teologiche', *L'Osservatore Romano*, 9–10 February 1942, 1). The conception of tradition proposed by the *nouvelle théologie*, far from being traditionalist, in the

sense of a repetition of the recent past, is concerned rather with the unity of the ever-living tradition (Congar 1964: 146)

(p. 688) De Lubac and Daniélou were among the leading practitioners of *ressourcement*. Their books often seem like a rich, intricately woven medieval tapestry of texts from the tradition. Congar and Chenu, without diminution or denial of the return to the sources, represent a strongly historical theology, what their neo-Thomist *confrères* would doubtless call a 'historicist' approach to theology, including the theology of St Thomas. What distinguishes the *ressourcement* theologians from the *nouveaux théologiens* is that the former were also *nouveaux théologiens* while the latter were not always committed to *ressourcement*. Rahner's approach sets him apart from other *nouveaux théologiens*; his 'supernatural existential' is an attempt to rethink the supernatural—one of the preoccupations of the *nouveaux théologiens*. In his later writings, however, he does not tend to refer explicitly to the Fathers or to cite them. What unites these overlapping elements is a certain *froideur* towards Thomism, or what they insist on calling neo-Thomism. Étienne Fouilloux contends that Congar became, with Chenu, de Lubac, and Daniélou 'the incarnation of a "new theology", French-style, less concerned with conformity to Scholasticism as with the return to the sources of Christianity and to a dialogue with the great prevailing currents of thought' (Congar 2001: 12).

Ressourcement and Vatican II: 'a Life-giving Legacy'

Vatican II provided a historic opportunity for the *ressourcement* intellectuals to influence the Christian Churches and modern society. They brought to the council important but neglected elements of the tradition including biblical studies, the patristic and liturgical renewal, ecumenism, and the revitalization of Thomism. Gerald O'Collins depicts the influence of *ressourcement* on the conciliar texts with acuity: 'Those who scour the sixteen documents of Vatican II for *explicit* reference to *ressourcement*, or the return to the sources, will find something to report.' He points to the Decree on the Appropriate renewal of Religious Life (*Perfectatae caritatis*, 28 October 1965) as 'the clearest endorsement of *ressourcement*'. In like manner, the Decree on the Training of Priests (*Optatam Totius*), promulgated on the same day as *Perfectatae caritatis* (28 October 1965) with its provision for study of the biblical languages provided access to the sources (*OT* 13). The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*, 18 November 1965) called on all Christians to be 'nourished and ruled by Sacred Scripture', 'the pure and perennial source of spiritual life' (*DV* 21, 25), while the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7 December 1965) exhorted clergy to read and meditate on the Scriptures. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963) and the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 21 November 1964) also contained innovative ideas for a recovery of the ancient tradition.

(p. 689) De Lubac and Congar at the Council

On 20 July 1960, John XXIII (pontificate 1958–63) nominated de Lubac and Congar as consultants to the Preparatory Theological Commission. The commission's president, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani (1890–1979), was a veritable opponent of the *nouvelle théologie* and did not share the pope's confidence in de Lubac while the commission's secretary, Sebastian Tromp (1889–1975), a Jesuit, could hardly be considered a friend of de Lubac or Congar. De Lubac later commented poignantly on the historical significance of the pope's nominees:

> These were two symbolic names. John XXIII had undoubtedly wanted to make everyone understand that the difficulties that had occurred under the previous pontificate between Rome and the Jesuit and Dominican orders in France were to be forgotten
>
> (de Lubac 1993: 116).

Although de Lubac considered resigning from the Preparatory Theological Commission, he ultimately recorded two notable achievements. First, he successfully defended his friend Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955) from an explicit condemnation by the council. Second, he defended the orthodoxy and integrity of his own writings against false interpretations.

De Lubac's membership of the Preparatory Theological Commission brought him 'almost automatically to the council' and on 28 September 1962, he was appointed an expert on the Doctrinal Commission (de Lubac 2007: 1.89). At the Council, he influenced such questions as the nature of the Church and its mission, revelation, the relationship between the Church and the world, and the Church's response to atheistic humanism (de Lubac 2007a: ch. 2–5; Neufeld 1988: 103, n. 56). The publication of *Carnets du Concile* (2007) and *Entretien autour de Vatican II* (2007/1985) provides a clear representation of de Lubac's role at Vatican II, as well as his mature reflections on critical issues for the Church.

De Lubac was 'one of the best-known and most outstanding from the very beginning' (Neufeld 1988: 88). His influence on *Lumen gentium* and *Gaudium et spes* has been carefully delineated by scholars. The following elements of *Lumen gentium* are attributed to him: (i) the duty of the Church to proclaim the gospel to all peoples as explained in *Le fondement théologique des missions*; (ii) the idea of Mary as a type of the Church, and (iii) the use of the term 'the mystery of the Church' both of which are expounded in his *Méditation sur l'Eglise*. Karl Heinz Neufeld provides a precise résumé of de Lubac's influence on *Lumen gentium*:

> *Lumen gentium* also shows signs of de Lubac's influence. In 1963 he had already described the Church as the sacrament of Jesus Christ, just as Jesus Christ as man is for us the sacrament of God. This is the expression of one of the principles of the Council's view of the Church. De Lubac developed this from his idea of the

> Church (p. 690) as mystery, which he had used as a title in his *Méditation sur l'Eglise* and which he was to discuss in detail after the Council in his *Paradoxe et Mystère de l'Eglise*. But *Catholicisme* and *Corpus Mysticum* had already taken important preparatory steps in this direction. However, it was above all the *Méditation sur l'Eglise* with which the Council Fathers were familiar as a source of theological ideas and as inspiration for the spiritual life.
>
> (Neufeld 1988: 94; de Lubac 1946)

De Lubac's influence at Vatican II was also evident on the question of the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, drawing on *Catholicisme* and his works on Buddhism. He wrote a commentary on the 'Preamble' and first chapter of *Dei Verbum* in 1966 and again in a larger work published in 1968. He considered this text the most important of Vatican II. De Lubac was a member of the subcommission that produced the first chapter of *Gaudium et spes* that reflects his vision of the place of the Church in the modern world, as outlined in *Catholicisme*. He was also invited to write an introduction to *Gaudium et spes*. Further, de Lubac exercised a profound influence on the treatment of atheism in the Pastoral Constitution through his work *Le Drame de l'Humanisme athée*.

Turning to the contribution of Congar, it is evident that he placed himself entirely at the disposition of the council (Congar 2002: 17). The success of his ecclesiological programme is nowhere more apparent than in its impact on the teaching of the Church at Vatican II. The far-reaching programme of ecclesial reform executed at the council is the *de facto* consummation of his whole previous theological oeuvre. Congar describes role in the drafting of texts in *Mon journal du Concile* where he inserted a useful note, '*Sont de moi*', to indicate precisely his part in the genesis of the council's documents. He says that he worked on *Lumen gentium*, especially the first draft of many numbers of Chapter I, and on numbers 9, 13, 16, and 17 of Chapter II, as well as on some specific passages. In *De Revelatione*, he worked on Chapter II, and on number 21 which came from a first draft by him. In *De oecumenismo*, the preamble and the conclusion are, he says, more or less by him. Likewise, in *Nostra aetate* – the *Declaration on Non-Christian Religions* - the introduction and the conclusion are, he says, more or less his. In *Schema XIII ~ Gaudium et spes*, he worked on Chapters I and IV. He wrote all of Chapter I of *De Missionibus*, while Ratzinger contributed to number 8. In *De libertate religiosa*, Congar says that he cooperated with the entire project, and most particularly with the numbers of the theological part, and on the preamble which was entirely his own. Congar indicates that he reworked the preamble of *De Presbyteris*, as well as numbers 2–3, while also writing the first draft of numbers 4–6, and revising numbers 7–9, 12–14, and the conclusion, of which he compiled the second paragraph (Congar 2002: 871). Further, it is to Congar, among others, that credit must also be given for one of the most important achievements of the council, namely, the transition from a predominantly juridical conception of the Church to a more eschatological vision of the Church as the People of God.

In any account of the influence of *ressourcement* at Vatican II, reference should also be made to the role of Gérard Philips (1899–1972) who, with his colleagues from Louvain

(p. 691) made an indispensable contribution to the overall success of the council. In his capacity as the assistant secretary to the Doctrinal Commission, he was pre-eminent. As Congar remarks: 'The theological centre is Msgr Philips. […] Without any doubt, Philips is the number one artisan of the theological work of the Council' (Congar 2002: 510). He enjoyed the admiration and respect of all, including Ottaviani and Tromp (Congar 2002: 509). The Belgians occupied important positions on the Theological Commission, and exercised a commanding role in the Biblical Sub-Commission, where they effectively dominated everything (Congar 2002: 510).

Vatican II effected a Copernican revolution in the doctrine and teaching of the Catholic Church by a retrieval of vital elements from the biblical, liturgical, and patristic sources, largely thanks to the work of the leading *ressourcement* scholars. As O'Collins remarks:

> In major ways that teaching was shaped by theologians of the *ressourcement* movement: Chenu, Congar, Daniélou, de Lubac, Philips, Rahner, Ratzinger, Smulders, and others. They left the whole Christian Church a life-giving legacy in what they retrieved from the scriptures and the great tradition for the documents of Vatican II
>
> (O'Collins 2012: 391).

The Post-conciliar Period

Some of the leading *ressourcement* thinkers expressed concerns about the *aggiornamento* in unambiguous terms. In 1967, Congar asked: 'Where are we to go from here? Where shall we be in twenty years? I, too, feel almost every day a temptation of uneasiness in the face of all that has changed or is being called into question' (Congar 1968: 50). For his part, de Lubac made no secret of his concerns and criticized the fundamental misinterpretation of the council (Walsh 1992; de Lubac 1993: 158–159). He believed that the crisis at the heart of the Church after the council was a reflection of the crisis at the heart of Western society originating from a refusal to acknowledge the transcendent, a kind of modern Gnosticism that he referred to as 'a global repugnance to admitting the idea of a divine revelation'. This refusal to believe resulted inevitably in a spiritual decline and a corresponding growth in secularization. In 2010, Benedict XVI alluded to the unresolved tensions concerning the council's reception, and called into question both the interpretation and the implementation of its programme of renewal (Benedict XVI 2010: §4). Such difficulties notwithstanding, the advantages of the council's reform and renewal are clear at all levels of Church life.

The twentieth-century renaissance in Catholic theology coincided with the rise of totalitarianism. It emerged that the *ressourcement* theologians were not afraid to accept responsibility and to summon others in their respective spheres of influence to judgement and action in response to the dark side of totalitarianism in its various expressions. Failure to acknowledge their contribution to the French Resistance would also be a failure to recognize that *ressourcement* is fundamentally a practical theology (p. 692) engaged in an

open, critical, and sometimes militant fashion with the most pressing issues affecting contemporary society. Essentially they were religious men of ideas, driven along by the emerging currents of the times that they helped to create and in which they lived. An important part of their mission was the construction of a Christian humanism in response to the challenges of the Enlightenment, European totalitarianism, and secular modernity. The final part of this chapter assesses how communion theology represents a flowering of *ressourcement* for the Christian Churches and society.

Ressourcement and Communion Theology

Although there is no explicit reference to 'communion ecclesiology' in the documents of Vatican II, the term '*communio*' is embedded in the conciliar texts (Routhier 2006: 146–147), and it is generally agreed among scholars that the council's usage is essential for understanding the idea of communion (Philips 1968: 2.159). The rise of the international Communio movement in the 1970s saw theologians such as von Balthasar, de Lubac, Daniélou, and Ratzinger successfully adopt the language of *communio* as part of a growing resistance to the accommodation of the Christian gospel to the forces of modern secularization. As communion ecclesiology quickly gained momentum, significant high points were marked by the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (Synod of Bishops 1985), and the 1992 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) document, 'Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion'. The latter heralded the acceptance of *communio* as 'a key for the renewal of Catholic ecclesiology'. This trend was consolidated during the pontificate of John Paul II (1978–2005), when communion came to be seen as the dominant paradigm for the Church.

Communio (*Κκοινωνία*) is best understood in the context of the vision for Catholic ecumenism articulated at Vatican II and by the popes since that council. When *communio* is at the heart of the mystery of the Church it increases ecumenical fecundity. Cardinal Walter Kasper (b. 1933) points out that in the Western bilateral international dialogues 'the biblical and patristic understanding of the Church as communion/κοινωνία progressively emerged as a fundamental concept for describing the Church' (Kasper 2009: 72).

Communio and the Catholic Theological Renaissance

Important work has already been done to articulate the model of the Church as communion, including on the historical evolution of communion ecclesiologies (Rigal 2000), and the role of communion in ecumenical dialogue (Kasper 2004). What follows offers (p. 693) an analysis of the thought of leading French, German, and English-speaking scholars, including the original contributions of Congar and de Lubac, who made the category of communion central to their respective ecclesiologies. They worked assiduously for a reform of the hierarchical and centralized Church that had been dominant from medieval times and particularly from the Council of Trent (1545–63) (Congar 1962). The most effective solution for modern unbelief is the revival of what Congar calls the 'ecclesiology of communion and holiness' (Congar 1967: 261).

Congar and de Lubac: The Primary Authors of Communion Ecclesiology

The elements of the programme for Church renewal which Congar articulates through various biblical images form part of a communion ecclesiology that includes conciliarity, collegiality, and reception (Congar 1983). He situates the maternal and fraternal dimensions of the Church's nature, seen as perfectly compatible, in the context of *communio* (Congar 1970a: 26).

It is precisely in the view of the Church as communion that Congar locates the New Testament notion of κοινωνία which shows clearly that 'there is no union with God without fraternal relations, sharing and community' (Congar 1988: 91). He was engaged in groundbreaking work immediately prior to and during Vatican II in order to develop a more properly theological ecclesiology by appropriating the idea of *communio*. He recognized in this notion a key for the renewal of ecclesiology (Congar 1950). The principal elements in his communion ecclesiology include solidarity in love and service accomplished in the sacraments, the communion of bishops, who form the linchpin between the local Churches and the universal Church, and the place of the pope as guardian of the unity of the Church (Congar 1962a: 232–235).

The notion of the Church as communion served to overcome what Congar called the 'hierarchological' and juridical ecclesiology which dominated from Trent to Vatican II, and it effectively prioritized *communio* over institution without succumbing to the danger of a division between institution and community (Congar 2011: 84–85). Congar insists on the unity of the Church and asserts that eschatologically there will be only one Church: communion (Congar 2011: 87). Thus, while the unity of the Church is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit, it is effected in and through the sacraments which provide a meeting place for the institution and the community (Congar 1939: 82, 87–88; *LG* 8).

Congar, who is best known for his contribution to ecumenicism, views the Catholic principles of ecumenical dialogue in the context of *ressourcement* and a revitalized *communio*. By returning to the sources, he contributed to the formulation of an organic concept of the Church that is conciliar, collegial, Christological, pneumatological, and ecumenical (Congar 1966: 356–357). Pneumatology in fact played a decisive role in Congar's communion ecclesiology and helped to restore balance to the Church. In this way, the local and the catholic dimensions, far from being contradictory, are, in fact, suggestive of each other (Congar 1973: 17–18). Such a renewed model of the Church is (p. 694) essentially Trinitarian in nature, 'a community of persons' (Congar 1973a: 446). Congar's pneumatology, garnered from the *ressourcement* and dependent on it, is viewed by some scholars as providing a point of departure for a new dialogue between Christianity and other religions.

While the notion of *communio* has proved to be a fruitful starting point for ecumenism (see e.g. ARCIC II: 12, 49–58), the results of these endeavours have been rather disappointing. Some commentators have criticized Congar's communion ecclesiology for not going far enough in terms of Church reform and practical ecumenism. As the harbinger of the modern Catholic ecumenical movement, Congar was keenly aware of the obstacles on

the path to peace, unity, and mutual reform. In this context, there are two serious difficulties confronting ecumenism today that cannot be passed over without comment. First, there is a clear antinomy between ecumenical agreements, negotiated at the highest level between Churches, and, what can only be described as largely unchanged pastoral practice at local Church level, following the signing of such agreements. Second, there is the undeniable tenacity of ecclesial/political identities born of religious reformation or renewal but which have long since evolved into something more cultural/political than theological. Against such difficulties, it bears repeating that for divided communities or civilizations in conflict, living tolerably with an irreconcilable 'enemy' is less burdensome than war (Kaplan 2007: 142–143).

By using the lens of Church as sacrament, scholars have attempted to provide what is perhaps the most useful point of entry to the vision of the Church articulated by de Lubac and Congar—the primary authors of communion ecclesiology. It is evident that the restoration of the sacramental view of the Church facilitates an appropriate understanding of the role of the Church in the world, a central theme in the communion ecclesiologies of Congar and de Lubac. Renewed attention to the sacramental character of the Church also contributes to the debate on the impact of individualism and secular relativism in Christian theology.

De Lubac's vast oeuvre, some forty volumes and a large collection of articles, as well as journals, papers, and letters, has led to a significant level of theological and historical research (Sales 1974; Neufeld 1988). His innovative and practical vision of communion, articulated principally in his major texts *Catholicisme, Méditation sur l'Église*, and *Sur les Chemins de Dieu*, contributes to the life and mission of the Church in the present era of religious pluralism. Scholars situate de Lubac's contribution to theology in the following areas: first, his analysis of the relationship between nature and grace (de Lubac 1946a), secondly, his study of patristic and medieval exegesis (de Lubac 1998–2009), and, thirdly, his portrayal of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ which provides the foundation for a renewed eucharistic ecclesiology (de Lubac 1988: 88–105; 2011). His work for the renewal of the Catholic Church, seen in relation to his Christology and eschatology, is central to his entire theological edifice, as von Balthasar has shown: '[W]e must acknowledge in looking back upon the whole work that she [the church] is the real center of his whole life's work' (von Balthasar 1991: 105). Moreover, Dennis M. Doyle describes his contribution to communion ecclesiology in laudatory terms: '[T]here is only (p. 695) one figure whose contribution is comparable to that of Yves Congar, that is the French Jesuit Henri de Lubac' (Doyle 2000: 56).

De Lubac's communion ecclesiology attempted to respond to a growing spiritual crisis in Europe at the dawn of an era of nihilism and state brutality. In *Vocation de la France* (1941), he identified the origins of the spiritual and metaphysical crisis affecting European society. The roots of the crisis in Europe rests above all, according to de Lubac, in a failure of Christians (de Lubac 1941: 5). He proposed a twofold solution, namely, education and a return to the sources, 'un simple mouvement de retour au passé' (de Lubac 1941: 13). For de Lubac, the reconstruction of the Church and of society would necessi-

tate a Christian/Catholic spirit, which is none other than the spirit of European civilization and French tradition (de Lubac 1941: 25). The crisis in European society and civilization showed de Lubac and other like-minded Catholic intellectuals that the answer to the longings of the human heart is to be found in a profound sense of communion capable of withstanding the threat to humanity posed by state-sponsored aggressive secularization.

The salient elements of de Lubac's communion ecclesiology have been clearly identified. The first is the renewal of the Church as mystery, the broad contours of which have been documented by scholars (Lustiger et al. 1999). The apex of the twentieth-century renewal in Catholic theology is undoubtedly *Lumen gentium*, the flagship document of Vatican II, which bears the imprint of de Lubac's multidimensional vision of the Church encapsulating three key elements: mystery (*LG* 1), Christology (*LG* 6), and Mariology (*LG* 8) (Wagner 2007: 166–167). De Lubac unfolds a rich tapestry of the Church as mystery veiled in paradox (de Lubac 1986: 20, 26; 1969: 13ff.).

The key element of de Lubac's communion ecclesiology is the principle of engagement with the world. As he remarks: 'Yes, even after the splendid achievement of logical, clear exposition that is *Lumen gentium*, her most lucid self-definition yet, my meditation is still in the cul-de-sac of mystery' (de Lubac 1969: 3). In his early works, de Lubac sought to re-establish the Church's essential interconnectedness to the world and to history (de Lubac 1988: 167–168).

Through a meticulous study of the historical use of the term '*corpus mysticum*', de Lubac effected a recovery of the relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, the third element of his communion ecclesiology. In *Méditation sur l'Église*, he describes how the reciprocal relationship between the Church and the Eucharist works for the mutual benefit of the Church and the world:

> Thus everything points to a study of the relation between the Church and the Eucharist, which we may describe as standing as cause each to other. Each has been entrusted to the other, so to speak, by Christ; the Church produces the Eucharist, but the Eucharist also produces the Church. […] But in the last analysis it is the one Body which builds itself up through this mysterious interaction in and through the conditions of our present existence up to the day of its consummation
>
> (de Lubac 1986: 92–93).

(p. 696) De Lubac's treatment of Church and of Eucharist, based on a recovery of the insights of the Early Church Fathers and of the ancient liturgy on the symbolism of the eucharistic species, brings us to the heart of his communion theology. The direct consequence of his theology of the Mystical Body is to show anew that Christ and the Holy Spirit are working in the Eucharist to form the Church. As he writes:

> The Church thus really makes herself by the celebration of the mystery. […] The mystery of communication is rounded out in a mystery of communion–such is the

> meaning of the ancient and ever-fresh word “communion” which is currently used to describe the sacrament
>
> (de Lubac 1986: 108).

Perhaps the clearest benefit of de Lubac’s Eucharistic communion ecclesiology is that it provides a response to the excesses of modern individualism and offers renewed hope for ecumenism (Zizioulas 1997; McPartlan 2006).

This study of communion theology would be incomplete without including the contribution of Cardinal Jérôme Hamer (1916–96). In common with Congar, Hamer proposed a definition of the Church in terms of communion without denigrating its necessary institutional dimension. In his classic *L’Église est une Communion*, based on a course delivered at Le Saulchoir in Paris and at the University of Montreal, he argued that the word ‘communion’ is the principle of the Church’s unity and the source of its inner cohesion (Hamer 1964: 9). Perhaps the greatest benefit of Hamer’s treatment of communion is that he successfully harmonized a rich variety of images of the Church, notably, Body of Christ and People of God, which was to bear fruit in *Lumen gentium*.

Pope Paul VI alluded to the work that de Lubac, Congar, and others had done in his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam suam*, commended for its perceptive and highly influential treatment of dialogue. Perhaps the clearest testimony to the success of the communion theology articulated by leading *ressourcement* theologians is the Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on the theme of the Second Vatican Council:

> The ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea of the council’s documents. Koinonia/communion, founded on Sacred Scripture, has been held in great honor in the early church and in the Eastern churches to this day. Thus, much was done by the Second Vatican Council so that the church as communion might be more clearly understood and concretely incorporated into life
>
> (Synod of Bishops 1985: C.1).

Conclusion

The achievement of the *ressourcement* theologians lies principally in their capacity to engage with modernity, thus ensuring the place of the Christian Churches in the (p. 697) contemporary world. In historical terms, Congar became, with Chenu, de Lubac, and Daniélou, ‘the incarnation of a “new theology”, French-style, less concerned with conformity to Scholasticism as with the return to the sources of Christianity and to a dialogue with the great prevailing currents of thought’ (Fouilloux at Congar 2001: 12). In theological terms, the most important accomplishment of *ressourcement* has been the revitalization of the models of the Church as People of God and as *communio*, with Vatican II as the catalyst for renewal. The Church as *communio* is a message and a promise for the ‘world

of today', which, as Kasper has shown, possesses a capacity to build community, develop Church governance, and effect reform (Congar 1965; Kasper 1986: 100). In an era when Christianity is increasingly marginalized, the laity, a crucial element in the rediscovery of communion ecclesiology, provides perhaps the richest resource for the Churches and for society in the accomplishment of the vision of communion and *ressourcement* articulated at Vatican II.

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Transcendental Thomisms

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter locates those known as 'trasncendental Thomists' against the broad background, first, of the revival of Thomism in the late nineteenth century and, second, of debates concerning the relationship between faith and reason in Catholic circles since the late eighteenth century. The chapter then explores how Pierre Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal sought to bring Kant's discussion of the intellect's dynamism into conversation with Thomas's philosophy. Karl Rahner was influenced by Maréchal's work, but developed a far more comprehensive theological project. Lonergan's own transcendental project focused on a dynamic vision of human knowing and thinking, trying to adapt Thomist thought to a more historicist philosophical context. These two theologians continue to offer great promise for the future of Catholic theology.

Keywords: Thomism, Pierre Rousselot, Joseph Maréchal, Karl Rahner, Bernard Lonergan, Immanuel Kant, anthropology, intellect, history

Aeterni Patris and the Revival of Thomism

EARLY in his pontificate in 1879, when Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, he intended the restoration of Christian philosophy, specifically the teaching of the angelic doctor, Thomas Aquinas. For Leo, this scholastic doctor towered above all others and is rightly esteemed as 'the special bulwark and glory of the Catholic faith' (*Aeterni Patris* 17). Leo was concerned with 'the right use of philosophy' (*Aeterni Patris* 2) in accordance with the Catholic faith against a backdrop, as he saw it, of false philosophical opinions and errors. Following Origen (c. 185–254) and Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215), the right use of philosophy 'tends to smooth and fortify the road to true faith' (*Aeterni Patris* 4) and serves as a prelude or stepping stone to Christianity. The 'light of reason' and 'the super-added light of faith' (*Aeterni Patris* 2) were of a piece. Reason, by attending to the works and beauty of creation can point to their creator (Wis. 13:1). Thus philosophy pro-

vides theology with solid foundations enabling it to be classified as a ‘true science’ (*Aeterni Patris* 6).

The foundational error Leo had in mind was the overestimation of reason among those who ‘philosophize without any respect for faith’ (*Aeterni Patris* 24). Not that philosophy should use its own methods, principles, and arguments, but a genuinely Christian philosophy will see no discrepancy between reason and faith. In this Leo was following the First Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith (1870), *Dei Filius*, which reiterated how faith and reason mutually support one another, and how there can never be any real disagreement between them (*Dei Filius* 4).

This call for a revival of Thomistic philosophy, for a return to a single system of philosophy, arose in the light of the perceived dangers to theology from post-Cartesian (p. 702) philosophy, while the rise of natural science, it was said, led to rationalism, scepticism, and empiricism. It was time, according to Pope Leo, to return to the ‘old’ theology of the Scholastic Doctors and their syntheses of faith and reason, nature and grace, and philosophy and theology. What would ensue, however, as we shall see, was a century-long debate about the possibility within Catholic theology of a plurality of philosophical conceptual frameworks. Should Catholic theology restrict itself to Aristotelian metaphysics and endorse only one system of philosophy and theology as perennially valid? Where then is the role of history and development? And, underlying this, what constitutes fidelity to Thomas? Though unintended, the critical reception of *Aeterni Patris* would unleash a protracted and at times bitter discussion on such questions.

As archbishop of Perugia, Leo had developed his diocesan seminary into a centre of Thomistic studies, and now as pope he was determined to turn his vision into reality throughout the Catholic world. It was not that Leo wanted to turn the clock back. Rather, he believed that the Thomistic conviction about the congruence of faith and reason could provide the intellectual foundation for the Church’s response to the modern world. *Aeterni Patris* was the first of a number of wide-ranging encyclicals that dealt with many current issues of the day including socialism, Christian marriage, and the famous encyclical on the condition of workers, *Rerum novarum* (1891).

Leo implemented his vision of a revitalized scholasticism through a series of appointments in Rome, Louvain, and elsewhere. For example, the German Jesuit neo-scholastic theologian Joseph Kleutgen (1811–83) was appointed prefect of studies at the Gregorian University, while in Louvain the Higher Institute of Philosophy under the direction of Désiré (later Cardinal) Mercier promoted research into the history of Thomism and brought the thought of Thomas into dialogue with modern philosophy.

This was not the first attempt at reviving Thomas’s philosophy and theology. A previous Thomistic renaissance had begun in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the intellectual and spiritual revival of the Dominicans and, after the Council of Trent (1545–63), the texts of Thomas would occupy pride of place in Catholic theology. Key figures here were the Italian Dominican Cajetan (1469–1534), the Spanish Jesuits Luis de Molina (1535–1600) and Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), while other Spanish Dominican commen-

tators on Thomas included Melchior Cano (d. 1560), Francis of Vitoria (d. 1546), and Dominic Báñez (1528–1604). Here, we cannot go into the theological disputes between the Dominicans and Jesuits on the question of grace and free will, save to note that by the end of the seventeenth century there were two influential 'interpretations' of Thomas, each of which had ecclesiastical sanction. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, this scholasticism was on the wane. It had little influence on the modern philosophy of the Enlightenment and failed to engage with the new scientific discoveries of the time. The suppression of the Jesuits in 1772 and the disruption of Catholic educational institutions during the French Revolution spelled the demise of this form of the Thomistic tradition.

At a philosophical level a shift had taken place from seeing philosophy and theology as a unity, a unity grounded in Aristotelian epistemology, anthropology, and metaphysics, to a method that began with the Cartesian *cogito,* scepticism, and distrust of (p. 703) sense experience. This post-Cartesian break with Aristotle (McCool 1989: 14) meant a new starting point for philosophy: the mind's reflection on itself rather than on the data of sense experience. In other words, there was disagreement not only on the nature of reason, but on its precise contribution to the life of faith (and vice versa). On one side, in the aftermath of the French Revolution and its deChristianization of society, were the countermovements of theological romanticism and traditionalism (including ultramontanism)—united by their resistance to Enlightenment rationalism and its impact on Christian culture and society. Romanticism, reacting to the rationalization of nature, prized the value of the imagination, intuition, interiority, emotion, and spontaneous feeling. The Romantic revival included literary figures Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), with whom Schleiermacher was linked, and Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843). Traditionalism, associated in France with the names of Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821), Louis de Bonald (1754–1840), Félicité de Lamennais (1782–1854), and Louis Bautain (1796-1867), held that individual reason alone could not attain the basic religious and moral truths needed by society. These could only come by means of a primordial or special act of divine revelation transmitted through tradition to society as a whole. De Bonald, for instance, rejected what he saw as the reformers' emphasis on private judgement as the norm of truth, while Descartes's separation of philosophy from faith only led to epistemological scepticism. At issue was not just the link but also the distinction between faith and reason. In its suspicion of discursive reason, traditionalism viewed the intellect primarily as a receptive faculty, where God is known through an immediate intellectual intuition. This fideistic tendency would meet with official disapproval in the encyclical *Mirari vos* (1832). The act of faith, while supra-rational and graced, does not deprive human reason of its dignity and value.

On the other side, and modifying the traditionalist view were the 'semi-rationalists' who were convinced of the contribution of reason, i.e. philosophy, to theology and faith, and who wanted to meet the challenge of Kant and Hegel, whose philosophies dominated the age. Thus the German Catholic theologian, George Hermes (1775–1831), adapted Kant's division of speculative and practical reason. Speculative reason (*Vernunft* or the intuitive intelligence) can establish God's existence as first cause, but cannot prove God's attributes or the historical claims of Christianity. Practical reason, however, is capable of 'faith' in

such tenets as a way of motivating us to respond to the demands of the moral law. But Hermes's theology was later condemned, not least for his reducing the act of faith to the demands of a Kantian categorical imperative. Again, the reasonableness of the act of faith does not deprive it of its supernatural or graced character, its transcending the limits of natural knowledge. His contemporary, the Austrian Anton Günther (1783–1863), although accepting that certain supernatural truths (e.g. Trinity and Incarnation) can only be known by faith, attempted to demonstrate their intrinsic intelligibility and connectedness. His work was also criticized for viewing faith as merely a provisional form of knowledge that could be superseded by rational demonstration (Dulles 1994: 83).

The discussion on the interplay of faith and reason was advanced by the Catholic Tübingen school. Its founder, Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777–1853), drew on German (p. 704) idealism with its emphasis on human subjectivity. In contrast to the Aristotelian scholastic method, Drey wanted to show how doctrines develop rather than being perennially fixed. Thus, the best-known member of the school, Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838), presented the Church not only as the mystical body of Christ, but also in terms of organic development and historical becoming. In their twin concerns of fundamental theology and ecclesiology, the Tübingen theologians tried to show the interconnections between the orders of faith and reason, nature and grace, the speculative and the historical (Nichols 1998: 52). Further, the Romantic influence, including that of Schleiermacher, was evident in their claim that faith is not just rational assent to doctrinal propositions but transforms the believer from within, leading to union with God. This view of faith as an act of reason but also requiring the enlightenment of the mind and personal commitment would find a parallel in the work of John Henry Newman (1801–90) and his notion of the *pia affectio* derived from the early Church Fathers.

The official Church response to what was seen as, at best, an eclectic use of philosophy in relation to theology culminated, as we have noted, with *Dei Filius* (1870), which clarified the Catholic position on faith and reason. It spoke of how 'created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth' yet 'the submission of our faith should be in accordance with reason' (*Dei Filius* 4). Reason when enlightened by faith can indeed gain some understanding, e.g. by analogy, of the divine mysteries, while acknowledging that these are ultimately beyond the grasp of the human mind. Though the council did not formally espouse one particular theology, it was clear there was a reaction emerging against the perceived enemies of Catholic faith—fideism, traditionalism, and the various forms of rationalism. Prominent here was Joseph Kleutgen who influenced not only the drafting of *Dei Filius* but significantly, *Aeterni Patris*. He was assisted in the restoration of scholasticism as the Church's official philosophy and theology by his Jesuit colleague, Matteo Liberatore (1810–92), and by the appointment of new professors to the Gregorian College in Rome. Kleutgen and Liberatore were two of the most important intellectual forces driving the neo-Thomist movement which by 1880 would be well established in Rome, Perugia, Naples, Mainz, and Louvain.

Both Kleutgen and Liberatore maintained that the newer philosophies founded on Cartesian doubt and distrust of sense experience undermined the traditional Catholic (scholastic) position on the relations between the orders of faith and reason, and grace and nature (McCool 1977: 172). Thus traditionalism was criticized for undervaluing the ability of reason, indeed for confusing the natural and supernatural orders and the gratuity of grace. If Thomas presented the human subject as a dynamic unity of sense and intellect, Cartesian philosophies resulted in a subjectivist epistemology and a dualistic anthropology. At its heart, this was a dispute about epistemology and theological method. Scholastics such as Liberatore were epistemological realists (McCool 1977: 145)—we can trust our cognitive faculty and its ability to make objective judgments. Respect for the objective truth of Christian revelation and the teaching authority of the Church was contrasted with the subjectivity and individualism of modern philosophies, and traced back to the religious individualism of the reformers. Liberatore, for example, rejected ontologism and its positing of an (p. 705) intellectual intuition of divine reality in favour of a Thomistic epistemology in which the mind moves from apprehension or production of the concept to the act of judgement whereby an object is grasped directly. Sense and intellect together constitute the process of knowing. We come to knowledge of God not by way of an a priori intuition but a posteriori—from the world of sense experience. Kleutgen, too, noted the abandonment of Aristotelian epistemological realism and Thomistic metaphysics in 'modern' theology, for example, in Hermes. For these neo-Thomists, the scholastic method with its integrated system of philosophy and theology overcame the weaknesses of nineteenth-century theology and its blurring of the natural and supernatural orders (McCool 1977: 199).

Variations of Thomism: Rousselot and Maréchal

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, a series of papal pronouncements appeared against various philosophical and theological currents from empiricism and rationalism, to fideism and traditionalism. For its part, however, the restoration of the scholastic method in theology, despite its respect for the truth of revelation, was mainly a deductive impersonal science with little interest in history or in alternative theological methodologies. Subsequent historical scholarship would reveal, for example, how Kleutgen's theology owed more to one of Thomas's commentators, Francis Suarez, than to Thomas himself (McCool 1989: 229). Thus *Aeterni Patris* had triggered a process of *ressourcement* to unearth and recover the authentic thought of Thomas, the results of which it could not have anticipated.

One such result was the beginning of a philosophical pluralism, not least in approaches to Thomas's philosophy and theology. Two 'pairs' of examples are indicative of the different Thomistic trajectories in the early part of the twentieth century. On the one hand were the laymen Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) and Etienne Gilson (1884–1978). Maritain's contribution to the renewal of Thomism included his work on the great commentators on

Thomas, Cajetan, and John of St Thomas, his critical realism, and integration of the various levels of human knowledge. Gilson, primarily a historian of medieval philosophy, was able to show that while medieval Christian philosophy operated in a context of theology and faith, modern rationalist philosophy had severed that connection. His work on the philosophy of Thomas, Duns Scotus, and Bonaventure demonstrated not so much a common philosophy, as Leo XIII had assumed, but rather a similar *spirit* or style of philosophy, consonant with faith and revelation. Despite their different approaches, Gilson and Maritain were united in their opposition to a subjective starting point in philosophy—restricted to analysing the cognitional activity of the mind. Ecclesiastical authorities, too, suspected the 'turn to the subject' of sacrificing the objectivity of human knowledge and truth.

(p. 706) But if Gilson and Maritain were sceptical about bringing Thomas into dialogue with contemporary movements in philosophy, two Jesuits, Pierre Rousselot (1878–1915) and Joseph Maréchal (1878–1944), drew on Kant's discussion of the dynamism of the intellect in an effort to reappropriate the genuine thought of Thomas. Rousselot and Maréchal paved the way for the transcendental theologies of Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan.

For Rousselot, the intellect is a dynamic power oriented to God, the fullness of being (McDermott 1990: 16). He went beyond the Suarezian-inspired Thomistic epistemology that treated knowledge primarily in conceptual terms: the mind attains reality or being by way of the concept. Instead, by orienting the intellect towards God as its supernatural goal, conceptual knowledge is relativized and chastened. Conceptual or discursive knowledge cannot satisfy the soul's longing for union with God. Rousselot saw the intellect as a *capax Dei* (Rousselot 1935: 46), and drew on Aquinas's teaching about the natural desire for the beatific vision. Against a backdrop of condemnation of modernism and Vatican I's opposition to fideism and rationalism, Rousselot developed a more NeoPlatonic and mystical interpretation of Thomas's intellectualism. In this account, knowledge and truth are not so much a correspondence as an assimilation or union between mind and reality (Rousselot 1935: 35). Yet Rousselot was also aware that Thomas's Aristotelianism meant that matter and the senses were the 'sacramental' means by which the intellect attains the beatific vision. The infinite God is revealed through and in the finite.

In conceiving the intellect in terms of love of God, Rousselot brought together knowledge and love. God is the term, the *Verum* and the *Bonum*, of intellectual desire (McDermott 1983: 291). The intellect is the faculty of the divine (Rousselot 1935: 221), and has a connatural inclination towards or sympathy for God, the subsisting Truth. This 'possessive' or 'acquisitive' understanding of intellect, whereby the knower 'enters into' and becomes one with the object, issues in the Thomistic vision of the person participating in the life of God. Rousselot would take up this theme in his analysis of the act of faith. Indeed, many of Rousselot's emphases including the natural desire for the vision of God, the continuity between the natural and the supernatural realms, the relation between faith and reason,

and the limitations of conceptual knowledge would be developed by De Lubac, Rahner, and Lonergan.

Like his confrère and contemporary, Maréchal also stressed the dynamism of the intellect grounded in a Thomistic metaphysics of finality. The natural end of the human mind strives for God, strives to return to God by participating in the perfection of the Creator. Despite the censorious anti-modernist climate, Maréchal introduced what came to be known as the 'transcendental method' into theology. If one aspect of Thomistic epistemology holds that all knowledge comes from the senses, another strand emphasizes its a priori dimensions, its dependence on the light of the agent intellect. The transcendental method focuses on these a priori aspects of our knowledge, which it felt neo-Thomism had neglected. As Thomas put it, 'the science of our mind comes partly from within and partly from without' (*De Ver.* q.10, a.6, c).

Maréchal started out with what he calls the necessity of metaphysical affirmation. The intellect is not passive, but naturally tends to affirm, to reach the 'object in itself'. (p. 707) In the first four volumes of his *Le Point de Départ de la Métaphysique*, beginning with Aristotle's insistence on the necessity of affirmation, he showed how the realism of the ancients and their affirmation of being found its comprehensive synthesis in the philosophy of Thomas (Maréchal 1970: 17–18). For Thomas, while all knowledge begins with sense-perception, the intellect is also oriented beyond sense to Being. If the senses correspond to the apprehension of particulars, intellectual cognition is of the universal. In Thomistic parlance, the 'active intellect' illuminates the 'phantasm' or image that represents the material object, and abstracts from it the universal or 'intelligible species' (*ST* I, q.85, a.1). The abstract or universal concept, the *verbum mentis*, is the means by which the mind knows the object. For example, the mind can conceive the general or universal idea of humanity abstracted from the particularity of this man or this woman. It is, however, knowledge of the universal grounded and apprehended in the particular. The Thomistic theory of concept suggested to Maréchal an inner dynamic or 'movement' in our knowing (Maréchal 1970: 79) that takes us beyond conceptual representation to the affirmation of Absolute Being.

Maréchal contended that the harmony of senses and intellect in our quest for knowledge existed not only in Aristotle and Thomas but was also implicitly appreciated by Kant. Pre-Kantian philosophy, he maintained—including Ockham, Descartes, and his successors—sundered the synthesis and interdependence of sense and intellect at the heart of the cognitive process, leading to the dead ends of empiricism and rationalism (Maréchal 1970: 12–22). Kant, on the other hand, recognized the necessary and important role of the sense component in knowledge, but also realized that the mind was not simply a passive receptor of external stimuli; rather, it *actively* structured or imposed a form on our sense impressions. The form represents the a priori element in our knowledge. Knowledge only occurs when there is a cooperation of these two elements—the sensible and the intellectual.

Yet Maréchal wanted to go beyond Kant. While agreeing with him that knowledge is not a passive happening, but a structuring, unifying activity leading to substantial i.e. synthetic judgements, Maréchal disagreed with Kant's antinomy between understanding and reason, between phenomenon (the world of appearances) and noumenon (things as they are in themselves). For Kant, we remain ignorant of the noumenal realm—this serves only as a negative or limiting concept, marking out the limits of our sense knowledge. Kant, in Maréchal's view, developed a truncated account of cognition that failed to acknowledge the primal human drive to know Being. For Kant, since the absolute cannot be the object of direct experience it cannot play a constitutive role in the cognitive process. Maréchal, on the other hand, following Thomas, highlights the *dynamism* of the intellect—in knowing, our intellect extends beyond any limit into infinity (*SCG* I, q.43, a.7. See Maréchal 1970: 76–81). The ultimate satiating end of the intellect is absolute Being. Thus, in every intellectual act, we implicitly affirm the existence of God (Maréchal 1970: 185), or, as Aquinas put it, 'all knowing beings implicitly know God in everything they know' (*De Ver.* q.22, a.2, 1). Had Kant not restricted his *Critique of Pure Reason* to the phenomenal object and the a priori conditions for knowledge, had he acknowledged that the object of knowledge is not exhausted by the phenomenon, he (p. 708) would have admitted the metaphysical affirmation: the unrestricted dynamism of the mind towards the absolute or noumenon as an a priori condition of possibility of knowledge of any object. In brief, thought is not directed to itself but to Being, and no object can be affirmed if this term of the mind's dynamism is denied (McCool 1989: 109).

For Maréchal, then, the true *point de départ* of metaphysics lies in the dynamic tendency of the intellect to extend beyond any conceivable limit towards assimilation with Being (Matteo 1992: 117). *Pace* Kant, this dynamic finality of the intellect, this necessary reference to God, forms a 'constitutive' part of our cognitive striving. Our implicit affirmation of absolute Being or God is necessary a priori. The mind in its curiosity is driven from intellection to intellection, from object to object, dissatisfied with anything finite. 'The absolutely last end of our intelligence lies beyond it' (Maréchal 1970: 163): in knowing, our intellect enters into infinity, is united with its active principle, and strives towards truth.

Transcendental Theologies: Rahner and Lonergan

In twentieth-century theology it was the German Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner (1904–84), who was most closely associated with a transcendental method in theology. Rahner was influenced by Rousselot, but especially by Maréchal and the latter's move beyond traditional neo-scholasticism to dialogue with modern philosophy. Like Maréchal, Rahner went beyond the Kantian understanding of the transcendental subject in terms of the a priori conditions for the possibility of knowledge, though he also included this. He gave the term a 'vertical' meaning, recognizing that God is the presupposition or condition of possibility for all human knowledge (Weger 1980: 24). The 'restlessness of heart'—traditionally associated with Augustine in his *Confessions*—has as its counterpart in Rahner's

theology a *questioning* which he sees at the root of the human search for meaning and fulfilment. The person is a being of transcendence in the first instance because he or she can place everything in question. In his early lectures on the relationship between philosophy and theology, published in 1941 as *Hörer des Wortes* (*Hearer of the Word*), Rahner showed how the individual is a capacity, a question, to which only the Absolute can answer—one is a 'hearer', waiting for a word from the Absolute (Rahner 1994: 132). The *question* that is the human person, is the 'condition of possibility' of hearing the answer of Christian revelation. Such questioning provides an important context for Rahner's explanation of the 'transcendent' nature of the human person: it helps to explain why we experience dissatisfaction with anything finite purporting to answer, in an absolute way, the question of human existence.

Moreover, it is in this context of the questioning nature of spirit that Rahner locates the question of God. Reflecting on one's experience as a questioner, one realizes that the range of questions is open-ended: 'Every goal that one can point to in knowledge and (p. 709) in action is always relativized, is always a provisional step. Every answer is always just the beginning of a new question. …One always situates it in a broader horizon which looms before one in its vastness' (Rahner 1978: 32). In knowing the finite, one is already beyond the finite; one can only recognize a limit as a limit when one sees it over against the unlimited or the infinite. We are beings with an infinite horizon. This reaching out (*Vorgriff*) beyond the finite or the particular toward infinite being characterizes the human person and is explored in Rahner's earlier philosophical dissertation published in 1957, *Geist in Welt* (ET *Spirit in the World*). In Kantian terminology, the preapprehension of being is the 'condition of possibility' of all our knowing and willing.

In *Spirit in the World*, Rahner uses a Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge, explained in terms of transcendental and existential philosophy, to define the human person as that 'essence of absolute transcendence towards God' (Metz 1968: xvi). The human person as 'spirit', therefore, is capable of implicitly grasping (preapprehending) being or God, but always within the world of sense imagery. *Spirit in the World* starts out in dialogue with a specific question of Thomas in the *Summa* (*ST* I, q.84, a.7) concerning the possibility of metaphysics given that our knowledge is tied to sense images or phantasms. For Thomas, intellectual cognition is always of the universal which the active intellect (*intellectus agens*) teases out or 'abstracts' (*abstractio*) from the phantasm and impresses it on the mind. If knowledge begins in apprehension it culminates in the act of judgement—the affirmation of truth. Adapting Thomas, Rahner argues that the human intellect is, on the one hand open to the totality of being, while on the other, it is only actualized in the world. Human questioning presupposes knowledge of being, a knowledge while starting with the world ultimately transcends it. In other words, in all our dealings with the world, Rahner believes, we already have to do with God.

This thesis about the *Vorgriff auf esse*, about the transcendental orientation of the human person to God remained decisive for Rahner and has been described as the 'unifying principle' (Fiorenza 1968: xix) of his theology. It recurs in *Foundations*, where the human person is described as: 'a transcendent being insofar as all of one's knowledge and all of

one's conscious activity is grounded in a preapprehension of "being" as such, in an unthematic but ever-present knowledge of the infinity of reality' (Rahner 1978: 33). The theological implication of this thesis is a transcendental understanding of God; conceptual expressions about God, however necessary, 'always stem from the unobjectivated experience of transcendence … the concept from the preconception, the name from the experience of the nameless' (Rahner 1966: 50). Speaking of God as the infinite horizon or as the term of transcendence implies that the divine mystery cannot be classified within some well-defined system of coordinates and cannot be conceived adequately as an individual existent alongside other existents.

For Rahner, then, we can ask the metaphysical question (about Being) only if we already have some implicit preliminary a priori knowledge of Being. The term 'transcendental' designates this a priori moment in human knowing. In his analysis of the act of knowing, Rahner explains that, while the origin is with the world of sense images, the person returns to herself and becomes 'present to self over against another' (Rahner 1968: 133). Knowing entails, simultaneously, a moment of being with the 'other' and a (p. 710) moment of return to the 'self', where we make a judgement or 'affirmative synthesis' about reality. In returning to self, the knowing subject abstracts or distinguishes a universal (concept) from the singular or particular. As Rahner puts it, 'knowledge, in the apprehension of its individual object, always experiences itself as already and always moving beyond it' (Rahner 1968: 145). In the act of knowing, Being is revealed; knowing is fundamentally 'the self-luminosity of being'. Judgements always point beyond themselves; they have to do with Being, with an *excessus* to *esse*—a transcending comprehension of the world.

Although Rahner presented *Spirit in the World* as an essay on the metaphysics of human knowledge based on the thought of Aquinas, reviewers and critics, including his doctoral supervisor, felt it manipulated Thomistic texts and was overly influenced by Kant and to a lesser extent by Heidegger. Rahner never returned to *Spirit in the World*, later describing it as a 'work of youth'. Some of the underlying philosophical assumptions, for example, the identity of being and knowing, are called into question today by critics of onto-theology, e.g. Levinas (Marmion 2003: 207–208). Moreover, Rahner's transcendental arguments only point to the *possibility* that God is the infinite horizon of human questioning (Kilby 2004: 42–48). More positively, *Spirit in the World* can be considered not primarily as an essay on philosophical method—Rahner never claimed to have a specific method, nor did he describe himself as a 'transcendental Thomist'—but as developing a number of philosophical-anthropological insights (e.g. the dynamism of the intellect and the implicit affirmation of God in every act of judgement), whose theological implications were later worked out.

In fact, Rahner's career did take a more theological turn. In *Hearer of the Word*, which can be seen as a companion piece to *Spirit in the World*, he asks whether and to what extent the human person is open to a possible revelation from God. On the basis of Thomistic metaphysics and the groundwork of *Spirit in the World,* he developed a philosophy of religion, or ontology of the human person as an 'obediential potency' for divine

revelation (Rahner 1994: 1–11). His point, as we have seen, is that every philosophy of religion is also necessarily a statement about human nature and implies a metaphysical anthropology or fundamental theology (Rahner 1994: 149). The starting-point of metaphysics is the question about Being, about the ultimate foundation and ground of all reality, but also about human being. Developing Aquinas's insight that all knowing beings implicitly know God in everything they know, Rahner concluded that in all our judgements, at least implicitly, we reach for Being; indeed, 'we are, by our innermost being, always already referring to the absolute being of God' (Rahner 1994: 140). Human nature is absolute openness and receptivity for being. All being is knowable or intelligible (*Omne ens est verum*); being and knowing constitute an original unity (Rahner 1994: 29).

Thus the ability to hear a possible word of revelation from God is related to the constitution of the human person as one who lives in a perpetual reaching out towards the Absolute, in openness towards God. The other side of this a priori transcendence towards being is that we are historical beings and so must turn to the world as the place for a possible encounter with God. Receptive knowledge is in effect sense knowledge—we (p. 711) know being only and insofar as we know through the senses. The soul knows nothing without 'turning to the phantasms', as Thomas claimed. We go towards God only by entering into the world (Rahner 1994: 120).

A recurring criticism of Rahner is that he is too taken up with the individual cognitive subject, with a purely metaphysical analysis of the transcendental structure of the human person, that the political and societal dimensions of Christianity are overlooked. There is some truth to these claims though he is not as dichotomous as often presented. Liberation theologians, for example, Ignacio Ellacuría (1930–1989) and Jon Sobrino (1938–)—the former studied under Rahner, the latter was influenced by him—developed more historically and politically conscious theologies in contexts of injustice and poverty (Regan 2010: 138). Such contexts undoubtedly give their work a greater sense of historical urgency and concreteness. However, Rahner does not *exclusively* pursue a transcendental method, which then leads to insensitivity to social problems, but rather he follows a twofold theological method that incorporates transcendental *and* historical reflection (Marmion 1998: 307). Thus Rahner could agree with the characterization of his theology as a 'transcendental anthropology' as long as this did not give the impression he had bracketed the relation between transcendence and history. Much of Rahner's writings, especially since Vatican II, focused on the intraecclesial sphere and the need for structural change in the Church, while his support for the theology of liberation is evidenced in a letter shortly before his death to the archbishop of Lima in support of the work of Gustavo Gutiérrez. In sum, while Rahner sees the person living and acting in the concrete world, or *categorial* reality—a world characterized by pluralism and change—he also sees the 'more' of the human person in the a priori, that is, in the transcendental dimension of the human person. His transcendental method tries to show that this a priori element in the human person exists, and to elaborate and clarify its meaning (Marmion 1998: 132).

Rahner's Jesuit confrère and contemporary, Bernard Lonergan (1904–84), also developed a transcendental method or 'basic pattern of operations' (Lonergan 1971: 4) in the process of human knowing. Like Rahner, he was aware of the new cultural context of theology in the light of Vatican II. Theology could no longer be a deductive science, a *theologia perennis,* universally valid for all times and places; it needed to incorporate a more historical and contextual perspective and come to terms with the ideas of doctrinal development and change. Just as Aquinas provided an *aggiornamento* of medieval thought, so Lonergan wanted to shift some of the presuppositions of classical Thomism including its tendency to view truth as immutable and its static understanding of human nature. Of course, tradition and innovation were not inimical but a renewed theology required a renewed foundation. Lonergan's lasting contribution has been in the area of method, where he worked out, in a more elaborate and precise way than Rahner, a philosophy of knowledge.

Lonergan, then, can aptly be described as a theoretician of knowledge, which is essentially a process of raising and answering questions—the pursuit of an ideal grounded in the innate tendency that 'all [men] by nature desire to know' (Aristotle). In the mid-1940s, Lonergan published a series of articles that explored the concept of *verbum* in (p. 712) Aquinas, where many of his key notions (later developed in *Insight*) come to the fore. Starting with Aquinas's view of how our 'inner' words or concepts are related to their expression in 'outer' words or linguistic expression, Lonergan's thesis was that this relation will only emerge when we have grasped the nature of understanding. Understanding and meaning only come about as a result of a reflective process of cognitional enquiry. And such cognitional activity is more than 'taking a look'. Lonergan consistently eschews any analogy of intellectual activity with ocular vision. Instead, he shows how the process of knowing is not a single operation but takes place on two distinct levels: sensation and understanding. The senses, or what he calls 'experience', provide the data, but human knowing involves the further activities of understanding and judging. In effect, Lonergan devised three different interrelated levels of awareness in his analysis of cognitional activity, which constitute the infrastructure of knowledge: experience, understanding, and judgement (Lonergan 1957: 274–276).

Human knowing has a dynamic structure: each level, part, or activity summons forth the next. Experience stimulates inquiry which leads to insights and concepts, which in turn stimulate reflection, a marshalling of the evidence, and culminate in judgement or assent. In the act of judgement we posit a synthesis; we pass judgement on the correctness or otherwise of our understanding. Judgement answers the question: is it so? (Lonergan 1990: 111). Lonergan terms it an act of reflective understanding for which we are responsible. Throughout the cognitional process he draws attention to the subject's presence to him or herself, to the mind operating at the three levels of awareness. This normative and recurrent pattern of our knowing is conscious but our consciousness expands and develops as we progress from one level to the next. We move from the empirical or experiential level towards an understanding and articulation of what we have experienced. We move in fact from a position of 'naïve realism': knowing is primarily what we immediately see, experience, or intuit; to a 'critical realism': knowing is a dynamic, structured process, on-

ly at the conclusion of which can we affirm that our understanding is true and we know the real.

In short, 'human knowing is not some single operation but a structure of several operations' (Lonergan, 1967: 235). It is dynamic, moreover, in that it is an ever striving beyond what is given or known towards a fuller understanding of the yet unknown. *Insight* invites the reader to become familiar with the recurrent structure of his or her knowing—'the heuristic and progressive character of human intelligence' (Lonergan 1957: 541), to appropriate our rational self-consciousness, to understand what it is to understand. Insight (into the data of inquiry) is both an activity and knowledge. The process is heuristic in that we move, often laboriously, from questions to insight by means of investigation and discovery towards the 'known unknown' (Lonergan 1957: 531).

If the first part of *Insight* discusses what is happening when we are knowing, the second part asks 'what is known when that is happening?' (Lonergan 1957: xxii). The first question concerned cognitional theory and epistemology, while the second gives rise to an explicit metaphysics. To know means to know being—there is an unrestricted character to our knowing that strives beyond any finite limit. Being is the term of this unrestricted tendency or pure desire to know, the 'everything towards which our intellectual apparatus in principle tends' (Lonergan: 1990: 149). Being is naturally known (p. 713) to us because we have 'within us a light of intelligence that is a created participation of the eternal and uncreated light' (Lonergan 1957: 370; see also *ST* I, q.84, a.5). Following Aquinas, Lonergan stresses how the human intellect has an infinite range; it is *potens omnia facere et fieri.* There is a natural finality or teleology that unfolds in the cognitional process, which starts from insight into phantasms and moves from sense through understanding to judgement. And this spirit of reflective enquiry and wonder will, in fact, come to rest only in a supernatural vision of God. Truth is not merely within us but above us.

Explicit metaphysics is the unfolding and working out of the implications of the pure desire to know. Just as being is universal and includes everything, so metaphysics is concerned with synthesis—it underlies and unifies all other areas of knowledge. It describes and explains being. For Lonergan, it is a heuristic structure 'coincident with inquiring intelligence and critical reflection' imposing a 'normative structure' on our cognitional acts (Lonergan 1957: 394, 395). This personal task of self-appropriation, begun as cognitional theory and the appropriation of our intellectual and rational self-consciousness, develops into an ethics and an affirmation of God.

Lonergan tried to hold together the intellectual, moral, and religious dimensions of human existence. Along with the three levels of consciousness—experience, understanding, and judgement—there is a fourth level (more explicit in the later Lonergan), that of decision and responsibility. Judgement is oriented towards decision, towards a consistency between knowing and doing, theory, and praxis. Lonergan's transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible represent a call to conversion and self-transcendence not only at the cognitional level but also at the religious and moral levels. Being in love with God grounds an active faith. The dynamic state of being

in love, a gift of God (Rom. 5:5), is the ultimate fulfilment of our conscious intentionality (Lonergan 1971: 105) and is manifest in judgements of value and acts of loving.

Not unlike Rahner, we see in Lonergan an integration of the transcendental and the categorial, of system and history. His work, like Rahner's, reflects the shift from classicism to historical consciousness. In one of his last published papers he notes how the supremacy of the speculative intellect in Aristotelian scholasticism has given way to the primacy of praxis. He is referring not just to the importance of history for theology but to the need for a 'new theological method and style, continuous indeed with the old' (Lonergan 1985: 247). Lonergan's specific and lasting achievement, however, has been his analysis of the act of understanding—a process that pivots between the concrete and the abstract, the fixed and the changeable, the particular and the general.

Conclusion: Between Tradition and Innovation

We have seen how the call in *Aeterni Patris* for a renewed study of Aquinas did not lead to the 'perennial philosophy' envisaged by Leo XIII. Rather, the ahistorical and (p. 714) deductivist approach of neo-scholasticism, despite its many achievements, gave way to an ever-growing specialization and pluralism in philosophy and theology. From having provided the foundation for a Catholic philosophical and cultural world view, Thomism found itself in a changed philosophical environment. It was now just one of a number of philosophical approaches—from existentialism and personalism to phenomenology and hermeneutics. And while Thomists disagree as to the reasons for this decline and about possible responses, one reason was the failure to enter into dialogue with and integrate insights from other philosophical traditions. This does not apply, however, to Rahner and Lonergan, or their forebears Maréchal and Rousselot. Both Rahner and Lonergan took seriously the changed philosophical climate and drew out the theological implications. Moreover, each viewed Thomas as a great innovator, 'uncompromisingly progressive, if not actually revolutionary' (Rahner 1975: 10). But it was innovation founded on tradition: Thomas engaged with and developed the work of his philosophical and theological antecedents. Rahner was struck by Thomas's ability to focus on the fundamental, to think things out from the perspective of the whole, while maintaining a reverence before the divine mystery. Lonergan noticed how Thomas practised a method, the method of the *quaestio*, and he developed a transcendental method focused on the basic pattern of operations in cognitional activity. Method, for Lonergan, did not mean a slavish imitation of Thomas but 'a framework for creativity' (Lonergan 1971: xii), and for any future theology this implied taking human historicity and social contexts more seriously. In this new context for theology, he spoke about 'the constitutive role of meaning in human living … meanings that differ from nation to nation, from culture to culture' (Lonergan 1974: 61). If Lonergan offered a new method for theology, comprising eight functional specialities, with a view to making it more interdisciplinary and collaborative, Rahner's literary output was more ad hoc and pastoral, in talks and articles rather than in systematic treatises. Both Rahner and Lonergan saw Vatican II as a watershed that endorsed the distinction between an abiding deposit of faith and the way it is expressed and presented to meet the

needs of different times. They drew attention to the council's pastoral-theological approach in that it made no formal dogmatic definitions, and how its teaching was to be understood positively as the expression of 'instructions' or 'appeals' (Rahner) rather than in the context of errors to be condemned. Each was aware of how the Church had difficulty coming to terms with the historical, partial, and fragile character of Christian truth.

Yet the desire for a secure and certain foundation of knowledge can overlook the fact that all human knowing is connected not just with historical location and conceptual frameworks, but also with such factors as political contexts, ideological allegiances, psychological assumptions, and linguistic practices. Such factors undermine the claim that there is an unchanging meaning of dogmas that can be discovered outside history. Rahner insisted that the language of dogmatic statements should not be absolutized in the sense of identifying the language with the reality of which they speak. Rather, the truth of a dogma occurs only as it is appropriated in ever-new historical contexts.

Rahner and Lonergan also stressed a basic continuity between the development of doctrine and the patristic and conciliar heritage. Against a backdrop of the development (p. 715) of doctrine neither wanted to tie Christians to the world view or philosophical terminology of the fourth and fifth centuries. In fact, since Vatican II a measure of philosophical pluralism has been encouraged to the extent that this illumines rather than distorts the Christian message. The issue is how authentic doctrinal development can take place in the context of a pluralism of global theologies and competing views that cannot be adequately synthesized.

At one level, Vatican II can be seen as the Roman Catholic Church's rather belated attempt to engage with modernity. We have noted how the theological projects of Rahner and Lonergan facilitated this process. But this was not an uncritical engagement. Lonergan, for example, maintained that when the transcendental precepts are neglected, the common good is corrupted and society goes into terminal decline. And, while Rahner might be viewed as too much under the sway of Enlightenment modernity with its rationalistic and anthropocentric focus, in fact, his theology has affinities with current 'postmodern' emphases—including its unsystematic, questioning, and apophatic style. The experience of 'not-knowing', of not being able to provide any clear answers to a multitude of problems and questions led him to plea for a greater modesty in theological discourse, an experience linked to a central tenet of his theology, namely, the God of incomprehensible mystery, who cannot be explained with rationalistic clarity (Rahner 2000: 5). In Rahner epistemologies of control and grasping give way to a more tentative way of speaking about God (Endean 2005: 290). In the current postmodern climate which has lost and yet at the same time is trying to rediscover a sense of transcendence, both Lonergan and Rahner have demonstrated the importance of starting with the 'data' of religious experience. The mystagogical framework of Rahner's theology, its roots in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola, and how this influenced his Christology and existential ethics, have often been overlooked. It is not a matter of placing inner experience over against external ecclesial authority, but seeing God as the source of both and who works through both.

As theologies have become more contextual, interreligious, and interdisciplinary, it is clear that these cannot be based on one philosophical system and so theologians are wary of a theological method operating from a universal or transcultural viewpoint that overlooks the 'situatedness' of the knower (Crysdale 1994: 6). Indeed, Lonergan and Rahner acknowledged that the theologies of the future could no longer be a Eurocentric enterprise. That there now exists a genuine pluralism of theologies does not, however, invalidate their insights. Despite their lack of attention to the specificities of other religious traditions their transcendental projects offer important insights about what it means to be human, and about how we know, suggesting a possible metaphysical foundation or common ground between religions in their search for meaning and truth (Crowley 2010: 583). Moreover, it is hard to see how Lonergan's transcendental precepts or his injunctions against patterns of individual and group bias can be bypassed in any encounter with the religious other. Finally, in the light of such theological pluralism and fragmentation the question of theological method inevitably emerges. As believers continue to grapple with the intelligibility of faith and its correlation with human experience, the transcendental method—practised in a (p. 716) more and less systematic manner by Lonergan and Rahner respectively—represents their distinct contribution to a critically committed theology.

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Hans Urs von Balthasar

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the extensive corpus of Hans Urs von Balthasar by treating two architectonic themes in his thought: remembrance and beauty. In the first instance, Balthasar sees theology in modernity—especially in the form of neo-scholasticism—as marked by a failure to remember appropriately some essential principles of Christian tradition, most importantly the inseparability of theology and spirituality in an anti-Gnostic key. In the second instance, the theme of theological aesthetics is treated, initially by placing Balthasar's conception of a true seeing of natural forms against the background of Goethe's philosophy. The epiphanic nature of all created being, able to reveal to us the glory of God, and yet obscured from us by sin, lies at the heart of Balthasar's theology. Ultimately, this theology is Christocentric: the crucified and risen Christ-form becomes a permanent sacramental vehicle of divine grace, restoring our sight of natural form and divine glory.

Keywords: Balthasar, Goethe, memory, beauty, aesthetics, form, Gnosticism, ressourcement, modernity

THE most intellectually fecund theologians are, to borrow Isaiah Berlin's famous couplet, those who are able to be simultaneously hedgehogs and foxes: thinkers who know both one big thing and many, many little things (Berlin 2013). These theologians know precisely how to maintain the right proportion between all that they are for and all that they are against, and they always give priority to the former; to speak of God is to laud God first and last, and to lament sinners rarely and only when necessary. These theologians, moreover, know how to speak intelligently in their cultural contexts about God and God's grandeur, and they know how to speak of the many ways that God's creatures receive and reflect that grandeur, as well as the many ways they contrive to shun and revile it. By this measure, the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar must count as one of the most fecund theological projects of the past several centuries. His corpus of writings displays a remarkably ambitious and capacious theological mind. His theological mind is undoubtedly labyrinthine, to the great chagrin of many who have waded unprepared into the ocean of the millions of words flowing over the thousands and thousands of his published pages. But his theological mind is also fundamentally concerned with holism, and with re-pre-

senting what he takes to be the core genius of the Christian theological tradition in its complex glory as an intellectual reflection of the unsurpassable, incomprehensible love of God for creation.

Balthasar was born in Lucerne, Switzerland in 1905. His family was devoutly Catholic, and as a child he was educated at Benedictine and Jesuit schools. A talented student, he went on to post-secondary schooling in Vienna, Berlin, and Zurich. He studied broadly in the humanities, especially literature, and received a doctorate in 1928. His dissertation was a cross-disciplinary exercise in Christian eschatological–apocalyptic theology and modern German literature. He entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1928. For several years he studied scholastic theology and philosophy, from which he learned much, although he eventually soured on its formal and formulaic approach to Christian intellectual life. Balthasar then found his way into the circle of European Catholic intellectuals who were reviving the study of the Church Fathers in the hopes of returning Christian life to its pre-scholastic roots. The most influential leader in this *ressourcement* movement, Henri (p. 719) de Lubac (1896-1991), became his teacher and lifelong friend. Balthasar was ordained to the priesthood in 1936. He declined a professorship in Rome and opted instead for pastoral work as a student chaplain in Basel, Switzerland. Nevertheless, he continued to study and write on the Church Fathers, and published groundbreaking works on Gregory of Nyssa, Origen, and Maximus the Confessor. During this time he met and befriended the Reformed theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968), and Adrienne von Speyr (1902-1967), who was in the process of becoming a charismatic mystic and visionary. As yet more evidence of the incredible capaciousness of his theological mind, both figures were to become massively influential in his theological development.

With von Speyr as his close collaborator, Balthasar founded a lay contemplative community called the Community of St John in the early 1940s. Eventually this led to disagreements between Balthasar and the leaders of the Jesuit order, and in 1950 he left the Society of Jesus to work exclusively with von Speyr and on his own writing projects. Throughout the remainder of his life he supported himself by giving public lectures, publishing, and receiving gifts from family and friends (he was hosted for a time by von Speyr and her husband in their home). Without teaching or parish duties, most of the second half of his life was dedicated to ongoing scholarly research and writing. Despite his allegiance to the *ressourcement* vision for theological renewal, he continued his studies of Aquinas and in 1954 Balthasar published a large commentary on the theology of grace in the *Summa Theologica*. In the 1950s he also published works displaying several other dimensions of his rich theological mind: for example, he published books on the Jewish theologian and philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965), the Reformed theology of Karl Barth, the German writer Reinhold Schneider (1903-1958), and the French author George Bernanos (1888-1948). Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s Balthasar also worked on writing *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics,* the first a trilogy, each leg of which occupied many volumes. In 1965, in recognition of his outstanding work in Orthodox history and theology, and a sign that he was held in high respect in the world of Eastern Christianity,

Balthasar was awarded the *Golden Cross of Mount Athos* from the Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church in Switzerland.

Von Speyr passed away in 1967 and Balthasar began to publish her highly mystical and esoteric biblical commentaries and writings on prayer. That same year he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. Although he had not been a participant at the Second Vatican Council (a consequence of his break with the Society of Jesus), Balthasar was appointed to the International Theological Commission in Rome in 1969, and remained a member until the end of his life. In the 1970s and 1980s Balthasar's reputation as a remarkable Catholic intellectual continued to grow. He completed the second and third parts of his trilogy, *Theo-Drama* and *Theo-Logic*, oversaw the increasingly well-known publishing house of the Community of St John, *Johannes Verlag,* and helped to found and edit the international Catholic journal *Communio*. In 1980 he received an honorary doctorate from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC; in 1984 he received the Vatican's Paul VI Prize in theology; and in 1988 he was appointed to the Cardinalate by John Paul II. After first refusing the (p. 720) appointment he was persuaded by John Paul II to accept the honour. However, on 26 June 1988, two days before receiving the honour officially, Balthasar passed away.

Even this excessively succinct summary of his life nevertheless gives one a sense of the richness of Balthasar's theological mind. However, it is only by reading his works that one comes to appreciate how fantastically vast and ecumenically inclined was his mind. How is it possible to sketch his contribution without reducing its breadth and depth? The reduction can happen in one or two ways: some read Balthasar as being only a hedgehog (usually the charge is that he is a Hegelian one; e.g. Quash 2008); others see him as being only fox. In an effort to avoid either reduction, this chapter will attempt to show that Balthasar's entire corpus offers a lengthy, complex, impassioned, and intellectually sophisticated case for an active remembering of that consensus on the necessary unity of prayer and theology which is to be found in the great doctors and saints of the Christian tradition. Such remembering will lead theologians today to understand that theology cannot have its deepest, strongest roots in anything but the life of prayer—prayer that is communal and personal, sacramental and biblical in the fullest ecclesial sense. If Christian theology overcomes its amnesia and returns to these true roots, then Christian theologians will know how to speak intelligently in their cultural contexts about God and God's grandeur, and they will know how to speak of the many diverse ways that God's creatures receive and reflect that grandeur, as well as the many diverse ways they contrive to shun and revile it.

Pleading with Theology to Remember

A fundamental assumption underlying all Balthasar's writings is his belief that organized religion in the West is undergoing a prolonged crisis of authority due to its forgetful disregard of its own traditions of prayer and spiritual discipline. Balthasar believes that atheism and an irreligious life are not natural, and hence not sustainable. Human beings cre-

ated by God to eat and drink the eternal love of Trinitarian communion, but starved of spiritual guidance by the Christian churches, will seek their nourishment from different tables. The cultural vacuum created by Christianity's forfeiture of its spiritual and mystical heritage is being filled by a vast panoply of religious and quasi-religious discourses. Some offer to guide the spiritually perplexed into long-lost, or long-suppressed, 'secret' paths to 'hidden' mystical wisdom. On the other extreme, many believe in the myth of scientific, material, political 'progress', which its advocates dress up as a post-religious philosophy of life, but which is actually just pseudo-religion fed to those in denial about their state of starvation. Balthasar would argue that both approaches, despite the stories they tell themselves about being 'modern' and 'postmodern', amount to an anachronistic return to pre-biblical natural religion. Moreover, both are decadent, and even in some cases 'gnostic', forms of natural religion because they reject the core substance of revealed religion while in many cases attempting to cling to some of its terminology, (p. 721) images, and values. This is particularly true in regard to revealed religion's language of Spirit and its linear view of history. Those who reject still pillage concepts from revealed religion so easily because of the widespread assumption that Christianity either does not have a spiritual or mystical tradition, or if it does, that tradition is pernicious. Modern Christian theologians have been at best weak in countering this assumption, and at worst have been complicit in its dissemination. Balthasar saw all these trends emerging in mid-twentieth-century Europe, and he had a profound grasp of the sincere religious seeking behind them. He also anticipated many of the questions Christians ask themselves today about the rise of alternative spiritualities. He understood that it would be suicidal for the churches to simply force a choice between esotericism and traditional Christianity—such a move would only confirm the often-voiced suspicion that institutional religion is the mortal enemy of spirituality. Christianity can survive, and even thrive, in this cultural context if it can persuade not only its cultured despisers, but also its theologians, that institutional Christianity is not the rival of spiritual esotericism but its best friend, patron, and protector. Balthasar's *oeuvre* is a grand effort to make this case.

In one sense this is not a surprise—even a cursory reading of his major texts shows Balthasar is a major proponent of reviving Christianity's classical spiritual and mystical tradition, and he often makes decidedly contrarian, and even quite provocative, theological arguments on behalf of this project. His efforts to bring Origen and Meister Eckhart into mainstream theological respectability are just two cases in point (see Origen 2001; O'Regan 1996). Yet many have been so impressed by his arguments on behalf of theological aesthetics, they have overlooked the reasons why he makes these arguments, or even what they mean in terms of his larger theological agenda. Balthasar believes that all talk of 'beauty' in theology must lead to a renewed appreciation for the meaning of the biblical terms 'glory' and 'glorify'. Such renewed appreciation could give theology the ability to articulate what can be called a rule-governed Christian gnosis capable of functioning as organized Christianity's spiritual alternative to the alternative spiritualities of contemporary decadent and 'gnostic' revivals of natural religion (on Balthasar's theology as a project of remembering, see O'Regan 2014).

Balthasar learned from the *ressourcement* movement that for pre-scholastic tradition religious intellectual reflection must be regulated and guided by the spiritual life. And thus, throughout his corpus Balthasar argued that Christocentric Trinitarian faith must have regulative guidance over all types of rational 'logic', whether cosmology, anthropology, or even theology. The patristic term 'true gnosis' best describes the aim of the Christian tradition for Balthasar (see Borella 2001). Balthasar defines theology as an intellectual discipline oriented towards an opening of the heart to God. Theology, he explains, is:

> a means, an active agency for pouring the infinite riches of divine truth into the finite vessels in which revelation is given to us, so that the believer may be made capable of encountering this infinity in adoration and active obedience
>
> (Balthasar 1989: 152).

(p. 722) Theology's task is to facilitate a life of worship, adoration, and practical obedience to Christ, who can be known as the truth only insofar as he is known as the gift of personal love and not as an abstraction or theory.

> Theology speaks of an event so unique, so extraordinary that it is never permissible to abstract from it … There is always a tendency in human thought—and theology is no exception—to bracket the concrete and forget it. We are proven to look on historical revelation as a past event, as presupposed, and not as something that is always happening, to be listened to and obeyed; and it is this that becomes the matter of theological reflection. The saints have always been on guard against such an attitude, and immersed themselves in the actual circumstances of the events of revelation
>
> (Balthasar 1989a: 205).

Theology's *primary* (but not exclusive) dialogue partner must be the Christian contemplative tradition, not the Western philosophical tradition. Balthasar's reason for this is simple: 'Man in his search for truth can never arrive by philosophizing—in however simply or academic a way—at the statement "God is love" ' (Balthasar 1998: 54). This means that true theology is at root governed by the receptivity of prayer, not any purely objective concept or formal abstract method. 'There is no neutral standpoint outside the encounter between bride and Bridegroom', he declares, 'no objective standpoint, that is, from which it is possible to survey and assess the mystery of revelation in which both are involved (the Bridegroom as freely imparting it, the bride as responding)' (Balthasar 1989b: 211; see also Balthasar 1989a: 201). Theology therefore is not identical to dogma, or any form of abstract propositional discourse. While certainly and necessarily theology involves concepts and definitions, these finite realities are valid, Balthasar maintains, only insofar as they are vehicles for the incarnation of God's infinite love in human discourse (Balthasar 1989: 154). Theology is a mystagogical project whose goal is opening hearts to the reality of divine love, and is therefore best practiced by saints (Balthasar 1989a: 181).

Balthasar believes, therefore, that without the mutually correcting and informing guidance of theology and doctrine Christian spirituality will not remain truly Christian. His guiding incarnational principle is that in salvation history the invisible light and love of the Word and Spirit must dwell within the 'flesh', the 'form', and the 'letter'. Balthasar holds to a version of the *corpus triforme*—'threefold body'—tradition; the primary meaning of the phrase 'body of Christ' is the historical body of Jesus. But the 'final form and purpose' of the Word taking flesh is the mystical body, the Church. Through taking as two other forms of his body, the Eucharist and Scripture, Christ draws us into his mystical body. By 'scripture' here, Balthasar speaks of the unity of the two testaments and the gospel, Scripture as God's Word bearing witness to itself. The relationship between Church (and hence, tradition and dogma also) and Scripture must be understood as a relationship *within* the living multiform incarnate Christ (For *corpus triforme* Christology in premodern tradition see de Lubac 2006: 265–301. For Balthasar's use of the paradigm see 1989c; Mongrain 2002: 25–130).

(p. 723) 'Body of Christ' is a phrase, then, that may be used in many senses, and in Balthasar's revival of patristic Christocentric religious thought, dogma and theology are just two of Christ's many corporeal, iconic modes of incarnational presence, yet they are uniquely necessary for guiding faith and keeping all the other corporeal forms of ecclesial life true to the spiritual mystery of God's self-offering in love. He makes no pretense to novelty in this thinking—for Balthasar, the Christian tradition insists that just as there is a necessary, symbiotic unity of Word and flesh, Spirit and letter in all of Christian faith, there is an analogous unity between doctrine and spirituality (see Balthasar 1989a: 182–183, 195; and 1989b: 212–213). Moreover, against 'spiritualizing' anti-body thinkers, Balthasar maintains it to be a serious mistake to assume that because theology and dogma involve embodying of the Word in concepts, images, and the 'letter',this necessarily means a reduction of the Word's mystery and meaning. On the contrary, he argues, as an incarnational religion Christianity cannot disdain the expressions of the human intellect. Indeed, understood and applied correctly they can become iconic by leading into and protecting, rather than erasing, the mystery of divine love (Balthasar 1998a).

The dogmas of the Incarnation and the Trinity are particularly important because, properly understood, they provide the guidance for all mystagogy in the Church, theological or otherwise (Balthasar 1989a: 197–201). Balthasar's advocacy of not just incarnational and Trinitarian theology, but also of incarnational Trinitarian *faith* is a plea on behalf of a spiritual posture and existential disposition, not an advocacy of a conceptual fixing of God (Balthasar 1998a: 34; Balthasar 1994: 458–459). Faith is intrinsically necessary to reason's own ability to reflect and live the truth of God's being.

This perspective, according to Balthasar's argument in numerous texts, is the essence of 'Marian' spirituality (see e.g. Balthasar 1982: 362–365; 1992: 292–360; 1994: 399–405; 1986: 183–225; 1998b).

> A spirituality centered on the attitude exemplified by Mary is … not just one spirituality among others. For this reason, although Mary is an individual believer and,

> as such, the prototype and model of all response in faith, she resolves all particular spiritualities into the one spirituality of the bride of Christ, the Church (1989b: 218).

The reason for this is that Marian spirituality, Balthasar believes, is focused on participating in the dynamic, objective reality of the Word incarnating inner-Trinitarian love in the creation. In Marian spirituality, as Balthasar presents it, one 'unselfconsciously' cooperates with God in accepting the Word into one's self and then incarnating it in the world according to one's own unique personhood and capabilities. Marian spirituality is essentially a form of existential-ontological iconography in which one crafts one's life into a pattern of Christ-like obedience and love. The Marian and Johannine are therefore closely related in Balthasar's theology because both stress the meaning of holiness as intimate mystical unity and bearing fruit in the world. This spirituality is ecclesial in the sense of being not only embodied and communal but also a participation in God's providential work in history. It is also Trinitarian in that it is fundamentally about finding a unique, distinct identity through mystical union with the Triune God. But this is never a (p. 724) purely private affair. Christ bestows each form of spirituality in the Church 'from above' and with the purpose of serving the will of God and the greater good of the Church. Spiritual gifts are not given to individuals or groups for their own sake but only for the sake of the historical mission of the Church as guided by God's providence. The ultimate grounding of all spirituality in the Church, Balthasar maintains, is the work of the Trinity to become embodied in human life as communal difference-in-relation. This is at the core of what Balthasar means by 'genuine esotericism' and the 'true gnosis' of faith expressing itself in words and concepts (see e.g. Balthasar 1982: 131–141; 1984: 44, 60).

However, Balthasar does not believe this vision of true gnosis has been remembered or widely adhered to in modern Christianity. The ideal is difficult, he contends, because it runs against the sinful tendency of human reason to set up its own 'idols'—even especially 'theological' and doctrinal ones—so as to evade God's love and the difficult task of embodying it in iconic concepts (Balthasar 1998a: 39–40; 1994a: 80–81). This type of evasion is characteristic of much modern theology, he believes. When 'theology at the desk' superseded 'theology at prayer' in the post-Reformation period, Balthasar contends, both theology and spirituality fell into decadence (Balthasar 1989a: 187–194). The result was esotericism without substance and dogmatism without spiritual life. In the former case modern spirituality ceased to be Marian in a genuine sense and instead became too individualistic and focused on personal experience to the detriment of the wider life and mission of the Church. Rather than focusing on the reality of God and the embodying of this reality in iconic forms, modern spirituality became too subjective and interior. Spirituality began to excessively accent the 'psychological laboratory, with its experiments and statistics' instead of accenting the reality of God and the mission of the Church in history (Balthasar 1989a: 192). In the case of modern theology and dogma, the exact opposite happened: all personal spirituality was drained away and the intellect occupied itself with nothing but concepts; abstract propositional truth claims substituted for the living faith of the heart's love for God (Balthasar 1989e). Theology became fascinated by the 'scientific' method and, consciously or not, it set up neutrality and pure objectivity as its ideals (see

especially his critique of the ‘system’ in Balthasar 1994a). Generally speaking, Balthasar thinks that the split of spirituality and theology in modern Christianity is especially dangerous because it creates fertile soil for the reemergence of ancient Christian Gnosticism. When spirituality and theology are not integrated in a healthy symbiosis, Gnosticism invades and corrupts both.

The Consequences of Forgetting

All attempts to revive Christianity’s spiritual and mystical traditions must take very seriously the contemporary cultural context of the West. Balthasar argues this context includes a resurgent Gnosticism virulently hostile to Christian orthodoxy. Although Balthasar’s uses of the terms ‘gnosis’, ‘Gnostic’, and ‘Gnosticism’ are often imprecise and somewhat unfocused, they are not incoherent or conceptually irredeemable (for an (p. 725) overview see Mongrain 2002: 33–37). Granting, too, that Balthasar is not as precise as he could be about distinguishing the gnostic spiritual type and the intellectual systems spawned by some who share the type, he does offer a fairly clear spiritual profile. ‘False gnosis’ refuses to understand faith according to monotheistic and biblical categories. ‘False gnosis’ rewrites the Bible so that the divine is identical to—and not simply present within—the depths of the human self and/or the depths of nature. The Creator–creature distinction is lost and respect for creaturely freedom and personal uniqueness vanishes. The mark of ‘false gnosis’ in practical operation, therefore, will be a chronic neglect of prayer to a personal God of love. This neglect is motivated by a disdain for the very idea of a personal God who knows the secret, hidden recesses of the self but who is beyond the self’s manipulative control; this neglect manifests itself as a preference for purely and exclusively meditative forms of spirituality centred on either the self’s own concocted self-image or that can distract the self from itself and its freedom and responsibility, thereby instead allowing the self to focus on a void or on some fatalistic and impersonal forces in nature.

Central to Balthasar’s case against the spiritual type designated by ‘false gnosis,’ therefore, are his arguments about its deliberate effort to avoid dealing honestly with the ‘provocation’ of Christ (see Balthasar 1994: 21, 167–168, 445; 1990: 115–129). He characterizes the ‘theodrama’ of salvation history in terms of a ‘Yes or No to the Incarnation of the Son of the Father’—a Yes or No to the mystery of Christ and what it reveals about the God of love who probes the dark recesses of the heart (Balthasar 1994: 181; see also Balthasar 1984: 417–428). The proponents of false gnosis prefer to redefine Christ in spiritually safer and less challenging ways. The gnostic denies creaturely indebtedness to God as the ground of being, preferring the ‘self-absolutizing’ of human freedom and avoiding the truth that freedom comes from God as a gift. Balthasar interprets this sinful dynamic as the epitome of evil and sees it through the lens of the serpent’s temptation to Eve to ‘be like God’. It results in deformation of humanity: the ‘very power of self-transcendence’ given to humanity by God so that it could freely respond to God’s love becomes instead ‘bent in upon itself’ (*incurvatio in se ipsum*) in a perversion of human na-

ture (Balthasar 1994: 163–165). Later he describes this dynamic as ‘the creature’s No, its wanting to be autonomous without acknowledging its origin … ’ (Balthasar 1994: 329).

The gnostic, therefore, refuses the humility of being known by God—a spirituality of prayer—and prefers instead to be the only knower who knows God, self, and world from a panoptic perspective (many times Balthasar cites 1 Cor. 8.1–2 to contrast true and false gnosis, e.g. 1994: 463–464). This is what accounts for the ‘elitist and arrogant’ character of the gnostic type (Balthasar 1990: 448). What follows from this self-righteous arrogance then are elaborate efforts to rationalize this assertion with ‘sophisticated short-circuits in reasoning and distorted aspects of truth. In this way the sinner builds a kind of “bulwark” against the real truth; he hides behind its illusion, knowing all the while that the truth he has “wickedly suppressed” (Rom. 1:18) will eventually come to lay siege against his citadel’ (Balthasar 1994: 166–167). All quests for absolute knowledge and the perfectly logical religious system, no matter how different in form have this in common: a preference for the ‘idols of reason’ that allow the heart to avoid facing up to the reality of (p. 726) God’s love and enable its headlong flight from it. The versions of ‘Christian faith’ advocated by the gnostic type, Balthasar argues, are not true faith but instead ‘faith … overtaken or hollowed out by knowledge’ (Balthasar 1994: 457). The gnostic type practises any and all types of ‘rationalism’ to avoid God, all the while pretending to itself that it alone knows the truth about God (Balthasar 1994: 459–460).

According to Balthasar, this conflict between rival spiritual types led to an ‘increasing polarization’ between the Church’s mission to propagate biblical spirituality and ‘the satanic counter-strategy’ of its enemies to replace this spirituality with a non-biblical one of their own devising. This conflict eventually became a full ‘theodramatic war’ between the Christ–Church and the anti-Christ (Balthasar 1994: 21, 463).

Yet remembering in theology cannot only mean remembering past conflicts with past forms of gnosticism. It has also to remember how and why Christian orthodoxy won some battles, but lost others. The tradition has two anti-gnostic voices and Balthasar speaks in both. The first anti-gnostic voice speaks less of gnosticism as system and more of gnostics as a spiritual type (O’Regan 2006; 2001: 29–35). This voice is concerned with motivations, religiosity, and the types of selves who create and maintain gnostic systems. The focus in the first voice is existential and/or psychological experiences and states of mind. The second voice, present in Balthasar but to a lesser extent than the first, is an analytical voice that stands in some tension with the experiential voice. The analytical voice focuses on explaining theoretically and conceptually how gnostic narratives engage in a hostile rewriting of the biblical narrative into ‘speculative metanarratives with an emphasis on the generation of the conditions of absolute knowledge and total irrefutability’ (O’Regan 2006: 612). This analytical voice relies on philosophical and objective scholarly analysis of gnosticism as an ontotheology of divine development with specific theological agendas, rhetorical strategies, argumentative tactics, and hermeneutic methods. This voice stresses, therefore, the transgressive nature of gnostic narratives, but always in a descriptive rather than an evaluative mode; this voice insists that it is much more intellectually productive to give careful analytical attention to the specifics of the ‘rule governed’ practices

and ‘narrative grammar’ guiding both the overall pattern and the details of gnosticism’s hostile ‘metaleptic’ reinterpretations of the Judaism and Christianity (see O’Regan 2001: 99–177). This second voice eschews polemics and finds itself at home in the world of academia with its standards of ‘testable evidential criterion’ (O’Regan 2001: 32).

Occasionally, it is true that Balthasar writes in the first anti-gnostic voice in ways that repeat Irenaeus’s vicious slandering tactics, and which might unfortunately give the impression of religious paranoia (e.g. Balthasar 1994: 440, 463, 460). Nevertheless, I suggest that Balthasar’s use of the second voice softens his use of the first. Balthasar balances his priorities and proportions sufficiently that any anti-gnostic voice he uses is always subservient to his doxological voice. Even though Balthasar shares Irenaeus’s overall anti-gnostic mentality, he understands better than Irenaeus and traditional heresiologists the difference between a clean and dirty war! More importantly, like John Henry Newman, Balthasar understands that in the battle for orthodoxy, only holiness, which reflects the glory of God into everyday life, can persuade minds, capture hearts, and forge genuine peace (Balthasar 2005 and Newman 1909: 75–98, 222–250).

(p. 727) Beauty as Therapy for Christian Amnesia

Balthasar’s central intellectual proposal that aesthetics ought to be returned to its place of primacy in Christian theology is frequently misunderstood. This proposal strikes some ears as a call for a revival of Christianity’s historical practices of patronizing the arts and filling its churches and museums with statues and paintings. Some hear it as a rallying cry for a restoration of the more ornate, poetic, and high-culture liturgical styles of previous eras. Still others think Balthasar is advocating a Pietistic and Romantic assault on the use of reason in theology. Unfortunately these readings do more to distort what is truly at the heart of his proposal about the place of aesthetics in theology than they do to help us understand it.

A better way to approach his project in theological aesthetics would be to begin by noting that he could be quite negative about how sacred art sometimes functioned in Christianity. For example, he expresses sympathy for some of the anti-Nestorian motives behind Byzantine iconoclasm (Balthasar 1982: 41). Moreover, he sometimes reminds his readers that ‘beauty’ is not a word commonly used in the Bible for God. The Old Testament’s ‘Suffering Servant’ prophecy in Isaiah speaks only of ‘beauty’ in order to deny that it could apply to the Servant of Yahweh, and in the New Testament Paul makes a similar argument about Christ (Balthasar 1989d: 113). Balthasar also has a strong affinity for those who ask questions about whether it is unseemly in a fallen world saturated with ugliness, pain, and suffering to indulge in abstract intellectual reflection on the meaning of beauty. He greatly respects, too, the concerns of those who, like Luther and Kierkegaard, wonder how a religion centred on the Cross and the difficult ethical commitments of faith can let itself be distracted by merely pretty things and the dissolute way of being in the world they can inspire.

But of course sympathy with such concerns and acquiescence to all the conclusions of those who hold them are not the same. Balthasar insists that as valuable as these questions and concerns may be, they must not prevent us from reintroducing aesthetics into theology. The real issue is not whether beauty and theology should be reunited, but rather what we mean by the words ‘theology’ and ‘beauty’ in the first place, and what rules we will follow when reintegrating them. If theology means nothing but abstract propositions about God’s truth presented to the intellect, then there is no reason for a theology of God’s beauty. For Balthasar, subverting this quasi-rationalist obsession with proving and explaining God is the whole point of reintegrating aesthetics into theology. It would, thus, not help theology much either to speak of beauty in purely theoretical terms.

If, however, theology is properly understood, in its biblical and traditional sense, as reflection directly and deeply rooted in the Church’s life of prayer and spirituality, then it is clear that one cannot speak truthfully of the glorious revelation of God’s love in salvation history without the aid of a genuine aesthetics. The people who invented and developed the best Christian theology in the patristic and medieval eras knew this well, (p. 728) Balthasar believed. Thus Balthasar argues so forcefully for reintegrating beauty into theology because he believes that failing to do so would mean failing to grasp the existential disposition and spiritual posture required for knowing God in the only way God can possibly be known—as self-giving love. Attaining this understanding requires a love for creation and a willingness to participate in the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery with the whole of one’s being, heart, will, and mind. Balthasar views this understanding as doxology, and he is convinced that it and it alone is the only true path to true theology.

As noted above, Henri de Lubac was one of the most formative influences on Balthasar’s understanding of what theology should be. Much of de Lubac’s early intellectual career was occupied with arguing that the highly intellectual systems of neo-scholastic theology were insufficiently attuned to the mystery of God’s love. For too long, de Lubac complained in 1942, men who ‘know their theology’ have treated God and the truths of revelation reductively, assuming that God’s love could be approached like the truths of any other science. Consequently, de Lubac railed against theologians who indulged in the delusion they were ‘specialists’ in God in the same way scientists and mathematicians could be specialists in ‘chemistry or trigonometry … as if [revelation] could be reduced to some series of statements!’ (De Lubac 1996: 233–234). Balthasar similarly complains of an ecclesiastical rigidity in which:

> not only the faith but the heart, too, is wrapped up in a spiritless, conscientious and ultimately Pharisaical practice, a religion of dogmas and an enthusiasm for dogmas (the more that are defined, the better), a zeal for everything that can be seen, that is limited, calculable, controlled.
>
> (Balthasar 1993b: 502)

Too often Christian theologians are tempted to treat the free God of life as a lofty idea captured in their conceptual systems. In this way they can safely maintain, and unfortunately perpetuate, a closed spiritual posture.

Against such an approach, Balthasar maintains, theology in the classical tradition ‘has always been, at its height, a spiritual activity … ’ (Balthasar 1989d: 121). The ‘separation of theology and spirituality’ in much of modern theology ‘was quite unknown to the great premodern Christian theologians, most of whom were great saints and mystics who saw no dichotomy in their theology between doctrine and spirituality’ (Balthasar 1989a: 182–183). They were united in their view that Christian intellectual reflection must start with the beauty of the Word incarnate, crucified, and resurrected. Because this beauty fulfils and surpasses all purely inner-worldly forms of beauty, Balthasar argues, it ought to be designated by the term glory, which he considers the biblical term for signifying that God’s beauty exceeds in eminence and grandeur all finite forms of creaturely beauty. Theology begins therefore in doxology, and only from within the posture of worship does it seek to understand the revealed glory of God.

Balthasar finds a close analogy, therefore, between the receptive existential disposition required to perceive worldly beauty and the receptive spiritual posture necessary (p. 729) to encounter God’s love. Precisely because he sees this strong similarity, however, he thinks it essential to be precise when treating their relationship. Integration must result in fidelity, not falsification of either worldly or divine beauty. He terms the healthy, traditional integration of aesthetics and theology ‘theological aesthetics’ but he terms unhealthy modern attempts at integration ‘aesthetic theology’ (Balthasar 1982: 79–117). Aesthetic theology presupposes an existential disposition that is fundamentally at odds with Christian spirituality, and hence, too, is at odds with the authentic meaning of the beautiful. Aesthetic theology perverts the meaning of beauty because it fundamentally lacks a genuine Christian spirituality. It operates with an anxious existential disposition that fears the dark, chaotic, and deathly sides of existence. In an effort to persuade itself the world is pretty, safe, and secure, it turns away from biblical revelation to a sterile conceptual understanding of beauty, which it then projects onto its happy, smiling God. In a way analogous to dogmatism’s evasion of the mysterious reality of God, such ‘aestheticism’ yields a closed spiritual posture that has more to do with self-deception than it does with God or real beauty. Balthasar faults this understanding of beauty because it seeks to ‘exclude the element of the ugly, of the tragically fragmented, of the demonic’ rather than coming to terms with them in a healthy faithful spirituality. He declares, ‘Every aesthetic which simply seeks to ignore the nocturnal sides of existence can itself from the outset be ignored as a sort of aestheticism’ (Balthasar 1982: 460).

By contrast, theological aesthetics learn what God’s beauty truly and fully is from its serenely courageous openness to what revelation shows to be real.

> Christianity encourages us to maintain in the human a ‘serene courage’ [*gleichen Mut*], which is the root meaning of the word for indifference [*Gleich-mut*], a courage in the face of all that God has disposed, even the most difficult and contrary. And for a Christian this course will consist, not in dulling oneself against such harsh realities, but in enduring and surviving them, acknowledging how real

> the fear, the disgust, and the wariness are that are inherent in these realities. Things scarcely possible to accomplish now become possible for the Christian
>
> (Balthasar 2004: 37).

Theological aesthetics, therefore, is always focused on the Cross and refuses to either deny the ugly its place in a theology of God's beauty or explain the ugly away as an illusion compared with the beauty of God. His point is certainly not that there is a dark side to God, as Carl Jung and other gnostic thinkers have argued, but that humans cannot understand the revelation of God in Christ unless they face honestly and feel deeply the painful situation of sin and evil that Christ redeems. Quoting Karl Barth, Balthasar writes:

> The beauty of God in the 'beauty of Jesus Christ' appears therefore precisely in the crucified, but the crucified, precisely as such, is the one risen: 'in this self-disclosure, God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy, that which we would call ugly, as well as that which we would call beautiful
>
> (Balthasar 1990: 23).

(p. 730) Because 'the beauty of Jesus Christ' embraces life and death, joy and fear, the beautiful and the ugly, a theological aesthetics must embrace them too. Genuine theological aesthetics is committed above all to historical realism and therefore respects the realities of tragedy, ugliness, and death in its reflections. The dark elements of life must be accepted as real and lived with existential seriousness; they must not be rendered mere illusion by speculative theories constructed to hide from ourselves the reality of the world's suffering. Theological aesthetics, therefore, unites an authentic Christian spirituality centred on the Paschal Mystery with an existential disposition of serenely courageous receptivity to the real. For Balthasar, therefore, aesthetics will only be relevant to theology's task of remembering if it is understood as a discourse about the existential disposition and spiritual posture appropriate for responding to those realities in life that show themselves to us as crosses to be carried.

'Every worldly being is epiphanic' Balthasar states (2004: 59). All things in creation can be epiphanic in a two-fold sense: they can reveal the Being of the created world, the beautiful light in which all things show themselves to us as fascinating, mysterious, and worthy of exploration; they can also reveal God the Creator, the glorious Light in which all things show themselves as inherently good, mysterious, and worthy of redemptive love. Ultimately both senses are united in Balthasar's theological aesthetics because, following classic Thomist Catholic thinking, he believes grace presupposes nature and works within it to bring it to its perfection. Let us begin by focusing on the first sense, however, which is the creaturely foundation for the second, more strictly sacramental sense.

For those with the proper existential disposition and spiritual posture, Balthasar argues, all natural realities have an outward form which is the unique expression of both their creaturely essence and their mysterious 'innerness' (2004: 51). The outward form of a

thing or person is its unique voice—a voice that can be silent or audible—that reveals the truth of its own reality and its place in reality as a whole. Balthasar's thinking in all this closely follows Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749–1832) theory of natural forms, which Goethe worked out partly in reaction against the calculating, detached, analytical, approach to reality exemplified by Newtonian science and Kantian philosophy. With Goethe, Balthasar believes there is a unity between outward expression and inward spiritual truth in all things and persons, and the task of understanding requires engaged, open receptivity to what is being said by the object (Balthasar 1991: 339–386). Balthasar gives the example of how spiritually perceptive and receptive persons experience a tree:

> The life principle of a tree, invisible in itself, is essentially shown in the form, growth, and gradual decline in the appearance of the tree. In the variety of its phenomenal forms, the tree radiates its essential unity and thereby indicates the reality appropriate to it within the whole of reality. It has a *form*, one that changes organically, according to law, not arbitrarily. In other words, it is a form that proves to be a unified form that cannot be *trans*formed into something else. This phenomenal form of the entity is the way it expresses itself; it is a kind of voiceless, yet not inarticulate speech
>
> (Balthasar 2004: 59).

(p. 731) In this sense, those with a 'trained eye' see that the tree is 'self-interpreting', just as all things and persons are 'self-interpreting' to those who let them speak (Balthasar 2004: 60). Only those who are attentive and provide a space in themselves for the communicative, self-interpreting message of natural forms will hear and understand what they have to say. Generally the self-interpreting message is a revelation of the form's place in an organic network, its mode of dwelling in a holistic, symbiotic cosmos. Balthasar quotes Goethe's description of this as:

> Letting what is solid dissolve in spirit,
>
> As it keeps solid what is born of spirit
>
> (Balthasar 2004: 63).

This is why Goethe found Newton's atomistic analytical eye so objectionable: it silenced the most important messages living forms have to communicate about themselves.

Obviously the Goethean sacramental sensibility is not common. As the references to the 'trained eye', listening, attentiveness, and receptivity suggest, seeing forms with a genuinely spiritual knowledge requires a special aptitude for attunement and discernment. Perceiving the unity of the exoteric and esoteric is a learned skill, but, like language itself, it is a skill humans were created with the capacity to learn. And God designed the creation at all its levels to teach this skill by enabling all its natural forms to be vessels of spiritual light, capable of drawing those with attentive eyes and listening hearts into deeper and deeper engagement with natural beauty. Balthasar speaks of this as 'the mysterious character inherent in the knowable … ' (Balthasar 2000: 17). The mysteriousness

of things and human persons lies in the fact that in the dynamic of self-expression they simultaneously reveal and conceal themselves. In showing, saying, and giving themselves, they also communicate that there is a depth that is not shown, said, or given. Balthasar writes:

> The other, whether a human being or some other object in reality, is thus revealed to me as a mystery lying well beyond all grasping concepts precisely when it reveals itself to me without any desire to hold back. By the very fact of appearing, the other is illuminated, but the eye of the spirit knows the light without seeing the sun that shines
>
> (Balthasar 2004: 53).

Yet in knowing the other—seeing its form—one is made aware of the sun that shines within, and thereby becomes captivated with a desire to see more, know more, and learn more about this sun through the mediation of the form. Balthasar even goes so far as to speak of the knower being 'initiated … into the mysteries of the object … [the knower] explicitly lays hold only of a fraction of the object's depth and richness, albeit with the promise of further initiation to come' (Balthasar 2000: 40). Balthasar does not hesitate to call the acceptance of this initiation 'love'. A natural form, therefore, is 'beautiful' insofar as it radiates from within its external pattern—an ever-more alluring spiritual light that inspires ever-greater fascination with both its surface and its depth. (p. 732) This point is so central in Balthasar's thought that it merits underlining: the beauty of things and persons is not only due to the alluringly mysterious spiritual sun within them, but also to the fascinating and unique process by which each particular form, to borrow Goethe's words, dissolves spirit into what is solid while keeping solid what is born of spirit.

There is, Balthasar explains, a 'grace' in experiencing the world in this way, and those who see it have an implicit understanding of the mystery of the Creator God who dwells in all things. In revealing its own particular truth, Balthasar maintains, a natural form simultaneously reveals its participation in the fabric of life as a whole, and hence reveals the Being of the world and its status as a gift (Balthasar 2004: 63). Herein lies the aesthetic reality of all things: in being truly themselves in their naturalness they become numinous vessels of worldly beauty as it reveals and conceals itself, playfully enticing us into an exploratory relationship with its depths. In being beautiful in this sense, Balthasar believes, things and persons teach those with the desire to learn how to see natural forms as quasi-sacraments, and to hear them telling of God's glory. Natural forms teach us how to love by initiating us into the deep mystery of all things. This initiation thereby creates awareness in us of the spiritual foundations of life itself, and, ultimately, an awareness of the Creator God who bestows it all as gift. Those who have developed an aesthetic eye and a listening heart then know too the fundamental meaning of goodness and truth—not as moral rules to be followed and doctrines to be believed, but as organic, symbiotic ways of living and thinking rooted in and growing out of an aesthetic mode of life. One might say that for Balthasar God created natural forms so that through their mysterious beauty they might write God's law of love on human hearts.

This is particularly true of the natural form presented to us by other human persons. The human inter-subjective relationship is central to Balthasar's understanding of the aesthetic, and in many ways conditions his entire metaphysical ontology of natural forms. Nothing teaches more effectively the dynamics of revealing and concealing than loving dialogical relationships with other human persons. One of Balthasar's favourite examples of this truth is the relationship of an infant and its mother. 'The little child awakens to self-consciousness through being addressed by the love of his mother', he writes:

> The [child's] interpretation of the mother's smiling and of her whole gift of self is the answer, awakened by her, of love to love, when the 'I' is addressed by the 'Thou'; and precisely because it is understood in the very origin that the 'Thou' of the mother is not the 'I' of the child, but both centers move in the same ellipse of love, and because it is understood likewise in the very origin that this love is the highest good and is absolutely sufficient and that, a priori, nothing higher can be awaited beyond this, so that the fullness of reality is in principle enclosed in this 'I'–'Thou' (as in paradise) and that everything that may be experienced later as disappointment, deficiency and yearning longing is only descended from this: for this reason, everything—'I' and 'Thou' and the world—is lit up from this lightning flash of the origin with a ray so (p. 733) brilliant and whole that it also includes a disclosure of God. In the beginning was the word with which a loving 'Thou' summons forth the 'I': in the act of hearing lies directly, antecedent to all reflection, the fact that one has been given the gift of the reply; the little child does not 'consider' whether it will reply with love or nonlove to its mother's inviting smile, for just as the sun entices forth green growth, so does love awaken love; it is in the movement toward the 'Thou' that the 'I' becomes aware of itself. By giving itself, it experiences: *I* give *myself*. By crossing over from itself into what is other than itself, into the open world that offers it space, it experiences its freedom, its knowledge, its being as spirit.
>
> (Balthasar 1993a: 15–16; see also 1994: 99–100, 1991: 615–617, 2004a: 254–256)

In this passage Balthasar presents the anthropological connection between his aesthetics of natural forms and his theology. The analogy of the mother's smile and voice lighting up the child's whole world of meaning has the dual function of illuminating the dynamic of aesthetics in the encounter with natural forms in general, and the dynamic of grace in the encounter with the Incarnate Word in which one is born from above.

Nevertheless, despite the central and foundational importance of the human inter-subjective in Balthasar's presentation of worldly aesthetics, it is important to remember that he also insists that the beautiful, the good, and the true are united in the invisible depths of *all* things, and they make their appearance together to those who are appropriately disposed. Nothing in life can be reduced to being 'just' what analytical science tells about it (Balthasar 2000: 86).

Certainly Balthasar's spiritual ideal is appealing. However, why is the existential disposition and spiritual posture necessary for a genuinely spiritual knowledge of life so rare among human beings? Why is the aesthetic eye for the goodness and truth of the world so difficult to develop and maintain? And why do decadent forms of natural religion and gnosticism develop at all? As we have seen already, Balthasar's answers to these questions are complex—there are numerous anthropological and historical–cultural reasons why humans fail to dwell in creation spiritually. But aside from the question of why people live in sin, Balthasar's understanding of the basic dynamics of sin itself show us why he believes Christianity today must integrate this aesthetic into its theology.

Balthasar understands humanity's post-Fall sinful rejection of God in terms of his theological aesthetics. As my discussion of the *incurvatio in se ipsum* of false gnosis above indicates, Balthasar believes that sin is fundamentally a refusal to see the natural forms of the world as beautiful epiphanies of mystery. The turning away and turning inward of the sinful soul is based on refusal, even disgust, with that which is not the fascinating theatre of the self. Because goodness and truth are intimately intertwined with the ability to see and love beauty in natural forms, the refusal of aesthetic vision is also the refusal to be human as God created us. This refusal is simultaneously a rejection of God. It can take shape in the scientific effort to dissect a form into its component parts. This approach to things certainly can yield understanding, but if it is coupled with an ontological materialism—the belief that nature is only matter and not spirit—then it can also seriously impair one's spiritual vision. Even without a drive for scientific understanding (p. 734) and technological control, this approach can result in a practical materialism in which one goes about one's daily life utterly oblivious to the spiritual light radiating in natural forms. Living with a fragmented vision of reality, practical materialism sees things and people as nothing more than what they seem on the surface, and hence is ignorant of the more mysterious depths of reality open to those who see with an aesthetic eye.

The opposite approach, which Balthasar sometimes polemically calls 'Platonism' and 'Idealism', is the belief that forms are illusory and ultimately irrelevant to spiritual truth—one must leave behind the exterior shells of things as one goes beyond them to the pure spirit or soul within. The corollary of this approach is popular spiritualism, which in extreme form becomes the occult. Spiritualism and the occult always mistrust the 'letter' of religion as deception and stupidity, and instead only grant religious seriousness to that which is other-worldly, ghostly, and disincarnated. In both cases, materialist and spiritualist, human hearts grow cold to beauty and eventually learn to simply ignore it. Balthasar writes:

> Every anticipation of truth's self-presentation in the form of innate ideas, schemata, or categories would hinder this pure readiness. It would amount to a precipitous classification of something that, in reality, is manifesting itself in a new and original way to the subject, which would therefore be guilty of a know-it-all attitude that runs directly counter to any attentive listening. At bottom, one would be finished with what the other was going to say before he even had a chance to open his mouth. One would cut him off after his first word, because his self-manifesta-

> tion would already be classified in one's ready-made framework, schemata, and categories. Innate ideas would prevent any true dialogue, wound courtesy, and make love impossible
>
> (Balthasar 2000: 49).

There is another way to live a refusal to see the natural forms of the world as beautiful epiphanies of mystery and hence make love impossible. Confronted with the realities of evil, suffering, and death, this third way of living the refusal denies the inherent beauty, goodness, and truth of the world. This is often an underlying existential disposition behind the first two, but it can also exist on its own, refusing any effort to either fight or flee humanity's tragic plight on earth. This is the path of the existentially jaded and spiritually cynical. It is prevalent among those sensitive souls who have experienced to some extent an aesthetic receptivity to reality, and who therefore know the promise of beauty, goodness, and truth. Yet for some reason—deception, betrayal, or any number of other instantiations of the power of death and evil in the world—their trust in the promise was broken and they have closed themselves up in a defensive, anxious state of siege. When presented with a Goethean view of reality, the existentially jaded and spiritually cynical ask how one can advocate aesthetic seeing when one knows from painful experience that forms become deformed (compare Lewis 1991: 21–22). Indeed, tragically enough, Balthasar argues, Goethe himself eventually succumbed to this existential cynicism (Balthasar 1991: 386–408). All three types of refusal simply confirm for Balthasar a basic fact: it is not possible for purely inner-worldly aesthetics to consistently (p. 735) hold a doxological sacramental view of life—worldly aesthetics desperately needs a Christological transfiguration to redeem and preserve it.

Conclusion

We are now in a position to conclude our discussion of why Balthasar believes returning aesthetics to its rightful place of primacy in Christian theology facilitates theology's necessary remembering. Understanding the dynamics of worldly aesthetics, and the sinful refusal to participate in them according to created human nature, is the indispensable key for understanding the unity of creation and redemption in God's self-revelation in Christ (on Balthasar's Christology, see McIntosh 2000). The glory of God comes to us only in natural forms: no one sees pure divine glory and lives. This is why, Balthasar tirelessly asserts, in his self-revelations in history the invisible God made use of the natural forms of the Hebrew people and their religion, and then, in an unsurpassable and unique way, the natural–supernatural form of Jesus Christ. 'God's Incarnation perfects the whole ontology and aesthetics of created Being', he writes. 'The incarnation uses created Being at a new depth as a language and a means of expression for the divine Being and essence' (Balthasar 1982: 29). Understanding this clearly, the best theologians in the Christian tradition have always deployed a theological aesthetics in their reflections on the meaning of God's incarnation in Christ (and a succession of such figures is the focus of Balthasar's 1984 and 1986a). Following what he takes to be the best of the theological

tradition, Balthasar presents Jesus as the ‘Christ-form’. For those with a trained eye, the Christ-form interprets itself in the Scriptures and in the Church’s liturgical life as the deepest mystery of life and love ever bestowed on humanity. The Christ-form, like other natural forms that have been vehicles of grace in history, undergoes dissolution; the human person Jesus of Nazareth suffers a tragic, unjust death. But unlike all other forms the Christ-form overcomes dissolution through being raised from the dead in a spiritualized yet creaturely body. The Christ-form therefore becomes a permanent, unsurpassable sacramental vehicle of divine grace. The mystery addressing us from the depths of this glorious form—the grace of the Christ-form—is the redemptively alluring truth that, despite the reality of sin of death, the creation is good, and life on earth is a great blessing. Precisely because it is the absolute revelation of the Creator’s love for the creation, the Christ-form is the ultimate affirmation of life and license to love courageously and without restraint all worldly beauty, even when it undergoes tragic deformation and death (Balthasar maintains that God’s wrath and judgement expressed in the Christ-form must always be understood in the wider context of its expression of God’s forgiveness and love; see Balthasar 1994: 317–388).

Those who truly see the ‘Christ-form’ therefore know him and worship him as the ‘perfection of the form of the world’ and the ‘super-form’ of biblical religion. They become ‘mystics’ in the sense that they are enraptured by the unity of the Christ-form and the healing light of the Spirit it radiates. The Spirit of the Christ-form bestows an (p. 736) existential disposition and spiritual posture that enables Christian seers to deepen their contemplation of the Christ-form as the most transparent of all worldly forms radiating both the ‘the light of absolute being’ and the light of God’s Trinitarian mystery (Balthasar 1982: 141, 432, 602; 1990: 14). Like infants seeing the face of their mother, they are given selves predisposed to explore a world full of mystery. Yet, unlike infants, those who contemplate the Christ-form must die to an old self and be re-educated in the ways of love. The Christ-form heals and redeems the aesthetic dynamism of creation by destroying the power of sin and death to turn hearts cold and fill souls with anxiety. For Balthasar, then, the Christ-form not only re-educates humanity in its own nature, but also gives humans the ability to live their nature as creatures who were made to be lovingly attuned to lovely realities. The darkness of a fallen world need no longer cause people to refuse the existential disposition of doxological wonder and the spiritual posture of adventurous love. Contemplation of the ‘Christ-form’ as it is rooted in the world after Pentecost, implanting its grace deep into the aesthetic structures of created reality, will enable humanity to rediscover the mystery at the heart of the world, and in so doing discover and come to love and share in the deep mystery of Trinitarian love.

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Catholic Personalism up to John Paul II

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter charts the history of the Catholic Church's personalism and its major representatives up to John Paul II. It examines the deep origins of personalism and discusses the theological controversies of the early Church as the ultimate source and the revolutionary philosophy of Immanuel Kant as the proximate source of personalism. It examines movements in European philosophy that prepared the ground for the rise of personalism, including 'dialogical' thought and phenomenology, along with the various European schools of personalism. Finally, it outlines the central ideas of personalist philosophy, especially its attempt to think through the various realities of human being, and indeed of reality in general, in light of the radically unique character of personal existence, as well as those aspects of human being linked to personhood ranging from relationality and community to the significance of gender, sexuality, and the mystery of love.

Keywords: Catholic Church, personalism, John Paul II, philosophy, Immanuel Kant, dialogical thought, phenomenology, European schools of personalism, human being, personhood

THE term 'personalism' designates a number of philosophical movements that came to flourish primarily in the twentieth century, though they have common roots in late modernity and seeds in the early Christian period. Although they may reflect the rich intellectual legacy of the notion of 'person' in diverse and sometimes even opposed ways, they bear the name of 'personalism' to the extent that they take personhood to be a special kind of being, and indeed, to be in some sense the ultimate value or reality to which all other things are relative. Generally associated with a number of other schools of thought from the late modern era—for example, *Lebensphilosophie*, existentialism, and phenomenology—personalism is a philosophy with a decidedly religious orientation and foundation. It has grown for the most part within the Judeo-Christian tradition and especially in a Catholic context. In the following, we will offer, first, an account of the deep origins of this movement, then a survey of its major representatives up to John Paul II, and finally, a sketch of its central notions.

The Rise of Personalism

Considered historically, the rise of personalism may be attributed to two impulses. The first impulse, positive and general, was an effort to sound out the philosophical and political implications of the particular mode of being called ‘person’—the mystery of human interiority, the non-reducibility of the individual human being to the species, the paradoxes of relationality and uniqueness, and so forth—which the biblical tradition had introduced but had not yet fully explored. The second impulse, negative and particular, was the effort to resist the ‘dehumanizing’ intellectual and political forces that were growing in the modern period, and to rescue the special dignity of the human being in the face of the impoverishment of the notion of nature, due above all to the (p. 740) mechanistic tendencies of modern science. Although personalism shares many concerns and themes with classical and Renaissance humanism, it represents something genuinely novel by virtue of its origin in a specifically modern context. While humanism centres on man as the summit of the ‘great chain of being’, personalism arises, so to speak, after the breakdown of the *analogia entis* and, as we shall see, posits a radical discontinuity between specifically human existence and the rest of reality. Unbounded as it is by the disciplines of analogy, this unique starting point has led personalism to unprecedented insights into human existence, but at the same time has entailed certain dangers of exaggeration that have at times put personalists in tension with the classical tradition.

The ultimate source of personalism, which did not in fact initiate the movement but upon which thinkers drew once the movement was underway, is above all the theological controversies of the early Church. The term ‘person’—from *per-sonare*, to ‘sound through’—was first used to designate the masks in ancient Greek and Roman theatre, which both amplified the actor’s voice and illustrated his particular role or character. The notion extended beyond the dramatic context, first as a technical term in the Roman legal system, and then most significantly as employed in the formulation of Christological and Trinitarian dogma. Because ‘person,’ as dramatic character, indicated something both singular and distinct from nature, it offered a fruitful way of expressing the mystery of the unity in difference of Christ and of the Triune God. In subsequent philosophical reflection on the dogma, two definitions of ‘person’ came to prominence in particular. First, and above all, was Boethius’s definition, formulated around 513, which attempted to determine the particular *kind of being* a person is: ‘the person is an individual substance of a rational nature’ (*Contra Eutychen et Nestorium, c*.3). Second was Richard of St Victor’s attempt (*c*. 1173) to highlight the difference from nature required in order to illuminate the Trinitarian mystery of distinct persons sharing a single substance. Richard’s definition thus centres on the particular *mode of existence* indicated by personhood: ‘Person is the incommunicable existence of an intellectual nature’ (*De trinitate*, 4, 22). A number of themes from these early philosophical reflections became central for later personalist thinkers: for example, the spiritual nature of the person, his or her incommunicable uniqueness, the peculiar relationality of which persons alone are capable, and indeed the inherently dialogical character of the person (which was implicit in the dramatic origins but set into relief in the Trinitarian dogma).

Catholic Personalism up to John Paul II

The proximate source of modern personalism was the revolutionary philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), which gave rise to the various intellectual currents that eventually converged in personalism proper. Though he enthusiastically embraced the new mechanistic image of the natural world brought to a certain systematic completion by Newton, Kant drew a definitive line between the realm of nature, wholly subject to the laws of physics, and the realm of reason, which is essentially free insofar as it is subject to no laws except those it gives itself. Kant's so-called 'Copernican revolution' consisted in replacing the classical view of knowledge as the mind's conforming itself to being with a view of nature as radically subordinate to human reason: nature is intelligible only insofar as it enters into experience and thus subjects itself to the conditions of (p. 741) all possible experience, which reason itself determines. In this respect, the intellect and will that most properly characterize humanity and represent the source of human dignity are not in any way derivable from nature, but are strictly speaking unconditional. The highest human act is no longer contemplation, which would subordinate man to being, but now self-determination, and ethics comes to take centre stage in philosophy. The absoluteness of the human spirit lies behind Kant's (third) formulation of the categorical imperative, which later became one of the fundamental axioms of personalist ethics, namely, that humanity, whether in another or in oneself, must always be treated as an end and never as a mere means.

Kant's detachment of reason from nature generated developments in different and even opposed directions, many of which are of direct significance for the later personalists. On the one hand, there was the idealism of J. G. Fichte (1762–1814), the early F. W. J. Schelling (1775–1854), and G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), which interpreted reason itself as the ultimate reality of things, and thus saw not only the natural world but all of history as reason's project to achieve an ever-more-perfect self-determination. A version of this neo-Kantian idealism was embraced by the French philosopher Charles Renouvier (1815–1903), who worked out a very influential system of philosophy that in 1903 he gave the name 'Personalism'. Different from most personalist systems, Renouvier's philosophy was essentially atheistic, though he conceded the possibility of a 'deist' form. Along a similar neo-Kantian line, although in a more moderate form than that of the German Idealists who preceded him, was the philosopher Hermann Lotze (1817–81), who made *person*, as well as the crucial personalist theme of *value*, fundamental categories of his system. Lotze influenced Borden Parker Bowne (1847–1910), who returned to the US after his graduate study in Germany and founded the school of American Personalism, which is the instance of personalism best known to Anglo-American philosophers. There are overlapping themes and mutual recognition between this and the European schools of personalism that are the focus of the present essay, but the American school differs on two scores: first, its members are generally Methodist, and, second, they tend to be idealist philosophers in the strict sense of holding consciousness to be the only real reality, whereas the European personalists, as we shall see, give great importance to the embodied character of human consciousness.

On the other hand, Kant's absolutizing of freedom coexisted uneasily with his rationalism, which reinforced the pan-logism that was overtaking German intellectuals in the early nineteenth century with the revival of Spinoza's philosophy. This tension eventually led to the famous *Pantheismusstreit*, in which Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819) championed God's freedom over the necessity of reason, which he argued tended by its own logic to identify God with the eternal world order. To safeguard freedom from the absolutizing of reason thus required the *salto mortale* of faith. A version of Jacobi's position was adopted by Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), who gave the name of 'personalism' in 1799 (the first known instance of the term) to the rejection of the pantheism of rationalistic philosophy and the affirmation of the revealed God as a free being wholly transcendent of the created order. Interestingly, Schleiermacher here made use of the classical distinction between person and nature to resolve the problem of God's (p. 742) transcendence, and did so in a manner analogous to the Christological and Trinitarian solutions. The difference of Schleiermacher's position from the orthodox one, however, is that Schleiermacher made no reference to the Divine Persons, but attributed personhood to the *one* God.

Prompted in part by Jacobi's attack in 1811 on his philosophy as a kind of pantheistic naturalism, Schelling developed Jacobi's position in great detail in his later thought. In what he called his 'positive' philosophy, which begins with the 'unprethinkable' reality of existence that can be acknowledged only through an 'ecstasis', an expropriation of reason, Schelling elaborated a general notion of personality as a triumph that other-regarding love achieves in the human individual over the egoism of nature. Along these lines, he interpreted history as God's *becoming* personality through his conquering of the fragmentation of human sin. Differently from Schleiermacher, Schelling saw God's personhood as essentially connected with his Triunity: there can be no solitary person; the transcendence of nature is inconceivable apart from relationality. The absolute primacy given to existence in Schelling's positive philosophy made an impression on Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55), who as a young student in Berlin heard Schelling's famous 1841 inaugural lecture, in which the old professor unveiled his long-awaited philosophy of mythology and revelation. Although Kierkegaard did not make the term 'person' a central one, preferring to speak instead of 'the individual', his recognition of the infinite density of existence, the ineluctable drama of freedom, and the essential 'subjectivity' of truth—i.e. that it is not enough to say that something is simply true; I must instead recognize and contend with the fact that it is true specifically *for me*—made him a significant figure for the later personalist thinkers.

Two other movements in European philosophy prepared the ground for the rise of personalism. The first is what might be called 'dialogical' thought, and the second is phenomenology. The German Idealists generally acknowledged that 'spirit' and 'person' were essentially relational notions, or more directly that the notion of a solitary person is an oxymoron. This idea goes back to Jacobi, but can be traced through all of the thinkers mentioned above. Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–72) is typically identified as the originator of the dialogical insight that the 'I' exists only in relation to a 'Thou'. Feuerbach, however, strongly objected to the notion of the 'person', precisely because of its transcendence of

nature. For him, this transcendence entails alienation, and the projection of personhood onto God is alienation writ large, as it were. Nevertheless, and although the personalists decisively reject the materialistic tendencies of the Left Hegelians, they tend to embrace enthusiastically the Marxist notion that stems from Feuerbach, namely, that no one can be free unless all are free. The dialogical principle implies solidarity, a fundamental personalist theme, and was originally developed in a personalist direction by two Jewish philosophers, Martin Buber (1878–1965) and Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), and two Christian philosophers, Ferdinand Ebner (1882–1931) and Gabriel Marcel (1889–1973). Buber's notion that one ought to view the world in general in light of the personal I–Thou relationship was especially influential.

Phenomenology originated with Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), who pointed to the proto-personalist Lotze, among others, as an early influence. The heart of this new (p. 743) philosophical approach was twofold: first, the call 'back to things themselves', which involved a suspension of theoretical presuppositions and instead a renewed attention to the originary experiences that generated our ideas; and, second, an understanding of the *sui generis* characteristic of consciousness designated by the term 'intentionality'. Consciousness is always consciousness *of*, which means it is directed in a great variety of ways toward things, which reveal themselves accordingly. Phenomenology was significant for the personalists for many reasons: the importance it accords to the concrete, its broadening of the scope of experience beyond mere 'sense data' to include higher-level categoriality and the supra-conceptual sphere of feeling, and the 'creative' role it gives to man in the constitution of meaning. Husserl's initial exposition of the foundational notions of phenomenology in the ground-breaking *Logical Investigations* of 1900–1901 had a significant influence on the German and Polish personalists above all, as we shall see later. On the other hand, the personalists tended not to follow the more radical turn that Husserl's thought took with the *Ideas I* of 1913, in which he proposed the 'phenomenological reduction', i.e. the suspension of any affirmation of existence (*epochē*) in order to free pure consciousness and its pure objects (*noēsis-noēmata*). The personalists instead developed what they called a 'realist phenomenology', which carried out its phenomenological descriptions inside a fundamental acknowledgement of the existence of reality as independent of consciousness.

The Schools of Personalism

It is against this general background that we can locate the various European schools of personalism. The best known of these schools is that of the French. In addition to the neo-Kantianism of Renouvier, mentioned earlier, another impetus for this variegated movement came from the 'intuitional philosophies' developed by Maine de Biran (1766–1824) and Henri Bergson (1859–1944). There are three primary figures associated with French personalism, each with a significantly different interpretation. The first is Emmanuel Mounier (1905–50), who was very much an intellectual 'engagé' and was associated with a number of additional movements, including the 'Nonconformists of the 1930s', the 'Young Right', the 'New Order', and (through Peter Maurin) the American Catholic Work-

er movement. In 1932 (and in fact before he had adopted the term ‘personalism’, which he acquired through Paul Louis Landsberg, a student of Max Scheler), he founded the journal *Esprit*, which became the major organ of French personalism and is still in existence. Mounier himself pointed to the French man of letters Charles Péguy (1873–1914), whom he discovered in 1928, as the main inspiration for personalism. Like Péguy, Mounier developed his philosophy outside the academy, speaking directly to the emerging realities of history. He worked toward a ‘spiritual revolution’, aspiring to a vision of society founded on the unique reality of the human person, and thus rejecting both materialism and idealism, the political left and right, individualism and collectivism, and capitalism and socialism. In fact, he called for a radical rethinking (p. 744) of all the basic areas of philosophy—metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics—through the lens of the person.

A second strand is the ‘Thomist Personalism’, represented above all by Jacques Maritain, but which may be said to include the so-called ‘Existentialist Thomists’, Étienne Gilson, Aimé Forest, and Joseph de Finance, among others. Aquinas did not develop an extensive philosophy of the person, but he did affirm the person as ‘that which is most perfect in all of nature’ (*ST* I, q. 29, a.3), and remarked on the unique singularity that *persons* have in comparison to other individual substances (*ST* I, q. 29, a.1). Though initially a student of Bergson, Jacques Maritain, together with his wife Raissa, discovered the texts of Aquinas in 1908 and became convinced Thomists, turning against Bergson and the rising ‘modernist’ movement in France. In the area of political philosophy, however, Maritain moved beyond traditional Thomism in placing the *person* at the centre of society. In his book *The Person and the Common Good* (1947), which he wrote partly in response to the critique of his political thought that fellow Thomist Charles de Konick presented in an influential essay entitled, ‘On the Common Good, Against the Personalists’ (1943), Maritain drew a distinction between the individual and the person. The individual is a countable part of a whole, and can be interpreted either as standing over against that whole (individualism) or as subordinate to it as a constitutive member (collectivism). The person, by contrast, is never a mere part, but is always a whole in himself; at the same time, he never possesses his personhood apart from others, but rather always as intrinsically related to them in community. Maritain thus formulated a conception of society that has been widely accepted by personalist thinkers, defining it as a ‘whole made up of wholes.’

Gabriel Marcel is another modern French thinker commonly identified as a personalist. Marcel wrote his dissertation on Schelling and Coleridge, and possessed from the beginning a deep interest in the experience of concrete reality and the mysteries of human existence. He was also a musician and playwright, and in fact considered philosophy to be the third of his vocations. Like Maritain, he was a convert to Catholicism. In part as a result of his conversion, he felt obliged to study Thomas Aquinas, and did so for a significant period of time under Maritain, until he finally decided Aquinas did not speak to his primary philosophical concerns. Instead, his thought took an existentialist turn, and he developed a distinctively Catholic interpretation of existentialism in dialogue with Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), at the centre of which stood the human person. Marcel was particularly concerned with protecting the openness to others and to the mystery of being,

an openness of which only persons are capable, against the leveling tendencies of modern mass society.

In contrast to the significantly different forms of personalism in French thought, the German personalists generally stemmed from a common origin, namely, Husserl's phenomenology. The central figure of this school of personalism is no doubt Max Scheler (1874–1928), who converted to Catholicism for a time (Scheler eventually left the Church, and ultimately abandoned any belief in a transcendent God, in part because of a troubled personal life and in part because he came forcefully to reject Thomism, to which he felt the Catholic Church had problematically wedded herself), and who (p. 745) had an instrumental role in the conversions of the two other main figures: Edith Stein, who was briefly his student at Göttingen, and Dietrich von Hildebrand, who befriended Scheler at the meetings of the phenomenological circle that gathered in Munich. Scheler had studied under Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), Georg Simmel (1858–1918), and Rudolf Eucken (1846–1926), all of whom contributed to the intellectual movement that came to be known as the 'philosophy of life'. Scheler was also deeply impressed by the critique of modernity offered by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), and wrote a powerful book called *Ressentiment* (1913), which largely extended Nietzsche's attack on bourgeois mediocrity, but from a Catholic perspective and on the basis of love rather than the will to power. Although he affirmed the unconditionality of human reason, Scheler was critical of Kant's formalism, and he sought to develop instead a concrete ethics in which *values*, i.e. specifically *material* a prioris, were fundamental. After completing his studies and while a lecturer at the University of Jena, Scheler met Husserl and discovered the potential of phenomenology for his own philosophical pursuits. Though he was never formally a student of Husserl's, Scheler became known as a representative of the school. Scheler's thought centred on the theory of value, which led him to the significance of the person: the person is the supreme value, insofar as the person is the value for which all other values have their value. Values cannot be grasped intellectually, but are rather felt; Scheler identified the heart as the organ that perceives them, and love as the act that makes their perception possible. Love is a movement that precedes all cognition and willing as their source and is defined as a movement that opens one's eyes to ever-higher values in the object. Scheler's value-based ethics entailed a critique of eudaimonism, which in any event he felt was demanded by what Nietzsche referred to as Christianity's 'transvaluation of all values'.

Edith Stein (1891–1942) sought to reflect on basic dimensions of human experience from a phenomenological perspective. She studied under Husserl in Göttingen, following him to Freiburg, where she wrote her dissertation on the problem of empathy and then worked, along with Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), as Husserl's assistant. She left Freiburg in 1918 to work and study independently, and eventually came to embrace the Catholic faith in 1922. After her conversion, she took a teaching post at a Dominican school for girls and began to study John Henry Newman and Thomas Aquinas. Toward the end of her life, which was cut tragically short by her being sent to the gas chambers at Auschwitz, she wrote her magnum opus called, *Eternal and Finite Being*, which attempt-

ed to synthesize Aquinas and Husserl. She is also known for her philosophical studies on woman and her reflections on faith and the life of prayer.

Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889–1977), himself an outspoken critic of the Nazi regime who was forced to flee the country in secret with his family, took a deep interest in the meaning of the person and the transformation of personhood in Christ. He also wrote perhaps the most extensive philosophical study on the nature of love (only very recently translated into English), which is based on Scheler's axiological ethics. For von Hildebrand, while all love is a 'value-response', that is, a response to the objective good of a thing beyond any subjective interest, personal love is a 'super value response', which includes self-fulfilment inside the objectivity of value-response. This results in a self-gift (p. 746) to the beloved, which is a unique kind of self-transcendence. Among his various studies, von Hildebrand explored the notion of personal love in marriage and the relation between man and woman in works that had an influence on the thought of Karol Wojtyła.

Another student of Husserl's, the Pole Roman Ingarden, brought a realist phenomenology back to Poland and introduced the young Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005) to the philosophy of Max Scheler. Having studied in Rome and written his dissertation on the concept of faith in St John of the Cross under the leading Thomist Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877–1964), Wojtyła developed his own thought in a phenomenological direction with a habilitation study on Scheler, which explored the question of whether Scheler's thought provided a sufficient resource for a Catholic ethics. He determined that it did not, insofar as it placed too much emphasis on *feeling* and not enough on the *will*, but through this study he embraced phenomenology as particularly fruitful for his own interest, namely, a philosophy centred on the mystery of humanity. Wojtyła worked out his own approach to phenomenology in two books that represent major references in personalistic studies, namely, *Love and Responsibility* (1960) and *The Acting Person (Act and Person)* (1969). In addition to his incorporation of a Kantian view of self-determination, Wojtyła, like Edith Stein, sought to articulate a distinctively 'Thomistic Personalism'. which rooted phenomenological analyses of value and action within a solidly 'objective' anthropology provided by Thomism, thus avoiding what he felt to be the danger of subjectivism in some forms of personalism and phenomenology. Wojtyla was the main proponent of the school of Polish Personalism that had its home at the Catholic University of Lublin, and he brought the world's attention to personalism through his election to the papacy as John Paul II in 1978.

The Core of Personalism

What most characterizes personalist philosophy is an attempt to think through the various realities of human being, and indeed of reality in general, in light of the radically unique character of personal existence. Moreover, with respect to the broader intellectual tradition, it has given novel attention to those aspects of human being especially linked to personhood, for example, the themes of relationality and community, the significance of gender, sexuality, and the mystery of love, and the experience of subjective interiority.

Catholic Personalism up to John Paul II

The core of personalism is the claim that persons are infinitely different from all other kinds of beings: the difference is infinite because there can be no common measure established that would permit comparison. Mounier once wrote that Marx was right to say that there is nothing in the world but objects, but wrong insofar as he failed to grasp the significance of persons, who are always *more* than mere objects; they are also subjects. And this means that they are not only 'in the world', but also in some sense transcend it. This distinctiveness is what lends persons an inalienable *dignity*. While, as Hobbes said, the value of all (other) things is their 'price', i.e. their exchange value, the unique (p. 747) character of their existence makes persons incomparable, unable to be 'counted' with other mere instances of a universal type, unexchangeable *qua* persons, and therefore literally of immeasurable worth. Hence, the so-called 'personalist principle' at the foundation of a personalist approach to ethics, namely, that persons may only be treated as ends and never as mere means.

What most immediately endows persons with this special status is their rational or 'spiritual' nature. Spirit, in contrast to matter, is capable of 'taking hold' of itself in self-reflection, which is to say that it is characterized by selfhood or subjectivity. Persons are unique, not in the first place by virtue of possessing special qualities that are not found in other beings, but rather by virtue of possessing *themselves*. In this respect, a person both *is* its nature and, to quote Richard of St Victor, *has* its nature (*persona est naturam habens*), which gives rise to a certain paradox: it is the nature of a person to transcend his nature, so as to be able to possess it even as the person is possessed by it. According to Aquinas, this capacity enables the person to be the *author* of his actions in a special way, or as modern personalists would put it, the person is not only capable of but also tasked with self-determination, i.e. the determining of his *self* in the determination of each of his actions. Scheler explains that the person lies at the centre of his acts, which is why the person is able to put himself or to express himself in what he does. This transcendence of nature, this selfhood, gives rise to an infinite wealth of what personalists refer to as 'subjectivity' or 'interior life'. When a person dies, it is not only the end of a thing in the world, but indeed the end of a world, insofar as the person as subject sees the world, so to speak, in a unique and unrepeatable way.

Now, the characterization of the person as representing an infinite interior depth that transcends his presence in the world as an object would seem to pose a threat to embodiment, history, and relationality; as Mounier says, this unique status would seem to cut man off from the world and from others. But in fact the opposite is true, at least for the European (Catholic) personalists: only persons, after all, have a self-conscious experience of bodiliness, have a history, and are capable of profound—not merely 'accidental'—relations. For personalists, first of all, being embodied is an indispensable aspect of the particular subjectivity that constitutes human personhood. In this sense, while it is true that I *have* a body, it is equally true that I *am* my body in the sense that my body is coconstitutive of the identity of my 'I'. Embodiment characterizes human subjectivity from its deepest roots. Because of this insight, personalists have been led to reflect, perhaps more deeply than any other philosophers in history, on the meaning of gender and sexuality, which John Paul II has revealed is precisely the *personal* dimension of bodily existence,

the ‘place’ where the distinctive status of the person comes to physical expression. Second, for all its rejection of materialism, personalism is not a ‘spiritualist’ philosophy, but it follows out the implications of embodiment to the point of being resolutely concrete and historical: personalist thinkers take a vital interest, not only in ethics, but more broadly in questions of culture, politics, and economics. Finally, in spite of its affirmation of the radical uniqueness of each person, personalism decisively rejects all forms of individualism. An individual is defined specifically as a *part*, and so as a ‘countable’ piece of a whole. Such a concept entails the dilemma of subordinating the (p. 748) human being to society in an improper collectivism, or to subordinating society to its members, in an improper individualism. As we saw earlier, a fundamental theme for personalists is that the ‘I’ exists only in relation to a ‘Thou’; personal identity is dialogically constituted. This theme acquires a particular importance in the context of revelation, in which the individual is addressed *as person* by God and thereby acquires a particular calling or mission that involves him intimately with the whole of humanity. In this sense, the person ‘transcends’ the distinction between being an individual and being a mere part of a collective. A personalist approach to society tends to reject both statism and libertarianism, promoting instead the concentric circles of intermediate human communities: the family, the village, the nation, the Church, and so forth.

This points to one of the most decisive contributions of personalism to philosophy: namely, the reflection on *love*, which was an important part of ancient and medieval thought, but slipped to the margins in the modern era, arguably because of a positivistic conception of nature. But personalism adds to the classical understanding of love a distinctive emphasis on the notion of ‘self-gift’. This emphasis stems from two aspects of personalism: first, because of the radical distinctiveness of personal being, the other can never be merely an *object* to me in any sense, including the appetitive sense. My love for an other can only be a love for the other as a person, i.e. the other as she exists in herself (subjectively). This means, however, that the other is not simply a beloved, but also a lover of me in turn, which makes me a recipient even in my giving. Love thus reveals itself to be essentially reciprocal, affirming of both the self and the other as *persons* in a special kind of transcendence. Second, because personal beings are defined by the capacity to *possess* themselves, in love, the person may give, not just things, i.e. objects or goods, but in fact his own unique and unrepeatable self or personhood. Ultimately this is the only response fully adequate to the personality of the other. Understood in terms of this exchange of selves, marriage comes to represent for the personalists a paradigm of personal existence and so a major theme of philosophical reflection.

One of the controversies that continues to occupy personalist philosophy is the question whether all human beings are persons, which is bound up with both the question whether the actual capacity for reasoning is necessary for the possession of the status of personhood and also the question, more generally, of the precise relationship between person and nature or being. Along these lines, one of the tasks for future reflection, which would in fact go a long way in resolving the controversy, is to bring personalism into more fruitful conversation with themes in classical philosophy by broadening personalism metaphysically as a context for phenomenological reflection, and by rethinking metaphysics

personalistically, i.e. by developing a philosophy of nature and being as love in light of the paradigmatic meaning of being given in personhood.

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Sacramental and Liturgical Theology, 1900–2000

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Abstract and Keywords

Over the twentieth century, sacramental theology developed from a largely juridical study focused on the requirements for valid celebration to a broader emphasis on the liturgical worship as a means of developing and sustaining Christian identity. From a definition of the sacraments that firmly distinguished them from other ritual acts, Catholic reflection gradually came to see these as more closely connected to other liturgies and private devotions. At the same time, new developments in history, theological anthropology, and ritual studies led to the belief that active participation of laypersons is essential to effective liturgy, and thus sacraments. The rites themselves, both sacramental and non-sacramental, were seen as the encounter of human agency with God's mysterious grace and a legitimate source for theological reflection. By the end of this period, the efficacy of the sacraments was linked to the full expression of Christian identity, including culture and ethics.

Keywords: sacramental theology, sacrament, liturgical theology, Liturgical Movement, worship, participation, laity, identity, lex orandi, ethics

THEOLOGICAL reflection on liturgical practice can already be seen in the New Testament or even in the Hebrew Bible, but the Liturgical Movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced a consensus that liturgical theology should be accessible to laypersons and reflect their experience of the faith. The Liturgical Movement included historical research, theological reflection, and ritual changes intended to promote better liturgy and better participation in the liturgy. From the common assumption that liturgy was something that priests did, following the precise template given to the apostles at the Last Supper, it gradually became clear that the liturgy is something the Church does, priests and laity, both traditional and ever new, and that it forms the Christian identity of those who practise it. Liturgies were revised to be more effective and engaging, and liturgical and sacramental theology evolved to consider the ways these liturgies informed Christian identity. The key to both was the concept of 'participation' in the liturgy, which was seen as the purpose of Christian worship and the wellspring of the spiritual life. The Second Vatican Council and the ongoing revision of rites from its close to the end of the twentieth century reflect this key understanding of participation.

The sacramental rites have traditionally given rise to theology in two ways: they both *express* truths about human beings, God, and salvation, and *accomplish* the reconciliation of human beings with God and one another. These have traditionally been interrelated according to the medieval axiom, *sacramenta efficiunt quod figurant* ('sacraments effect what they signify'). Over the course of the twentieth century, this axiom has been recognized in Catholic theology as a key to how God acts in all ecclesial worship, not only in the traditional seven sacraments. The awareness that both liturgy and sacrament developed throughout history prompted a recognition that both are ecclesial, and the study of each benefits from shared methods, outlooks, and concepts.

(p. 751) In 1900, sacramental theology was the theological analysis of how the sacraments functioned, and primarily attended to the *ex opere operato* effect of the seven sacraments of the Church. *Ex opere operato* means 'from the work worked', and refers to the infallible effect of the sacraments accomplished by God alone, which depends on the valid performance of a sacrament's proper form and matter by a legitimate minister. Sacramental theology defined and listed these requirements for valid celebration and explained the effect the sacrament would have, as long as the recipient did not place a spiritual *obex* ('obstacle') in the way of God's grace. The medieval period taught that only seven sacraments were instituted by Christ (baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance or reconciliation, orders, anointing of the sick, and marriage), and these were believed to have an *ex opere operato* effect. Other liturgies were treated as parallel to private prayer; grace was bestowed on the individual according to his or her devotion.

This division was challenged early in the twentieth century by the insight that the whole Church, clergy and laity, celebrate any liturgy, and that the list of seven sacraments was a late development, a canonical minimum not intended to downplay the importance of other liturgies such as the Liturgy of the Hours. As sacramental and liturgical theology have gradually come into dialogue, two great insights have arisen: that the graced relationship between God and humanity is the goal of both sacramental and liturgical worship; and that the sacraments are liturgical in the fullest sense, and bestow grace through the human language and culture they use. These two realizations, which may be called 'the turn to the subject' and 'the turn to language and embodiment', theologically inscribe a fundamental continuity between the role of sacraments and of the other liturgical rites of the Church at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Sacramental Theology within Neo-Thomism

Leo XIII's encyclical *Aeterni patris* (1879) affirmed the complementarity of faith and reason against Enlightenment rationalism, suggesting Thomas Aquinas's synthesis as an example for the modern period. This revival of interest ensured that Thomas's teaching on the sacraments would frame the sacramental theology of the first half of twentieth century. The Aristotelian philosophical framework of neo-Thomism led to an emphasis on the matter and form and efficient causality of the sacraments, obscuring somewhat the Chris-

tological and soteriological foundation of Thomas's work. This larger perspective was recovered in the middle of the twentieth century.

The manuals of the neo-scholastic tradition follow the outline of the *Summa theologiae,* in which *De sacramentis in genere* ('on the sacraments as a category' or 'on the sacraments in general') follows the incarnation and precedes the individual sacraments. The manuals focus on the requirements for valid celebration and on the *ex opere operato* effect. The treatise on the sacraments usually defines 'sacrament' and then examines (p. 752) what it means to say that one 'contains', 'confers', or 'conveys' grace; the effects and the meaning of *ex opere operato*; Christ's institution; and the requirements for minister and recipient.

Adolphe Tanquerey's *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae Specialis* (1895) provides an example of a manual in use at the beginning of the twentieth century. The section on the sacraments in general begins with two relevant official documents: a brief excerpt treating the sacraments in general from the bull *Exsultate Deo,* promulgated during the Council of Florence in 1439 by Pope Eugene IV; and the segment of the Canons of Trent treating the sacraments in general. After these primary sources, Tanquerey discusses the sacraments in general under five headings: their nature and existence; their matter and form; the effects of the sacraments; their causes; and the subject (i.e. recipient) of the sacraments. In accordance with the subtitle of the work (*ad mentem S. Thomas Aquinatis hodiernis moribus accommodata*), the treatment of each topic adapts the language of Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa theologiae.* For example, a sacrament is defined by Tanquerey as 'a sensible sign permanently instituted by God in order to signify grace and confer some sanctity' (Tanquerey 1895: 149). In other words, a sacrament 'is not a *merely speculative* sign, but a *practical* one, or one truly producing something' (Tanquerey 1895: 150). The treatment of matter and form after this introduction modifies Thomas's use of these terms in the *Summa,* but the rest of the outline is a modern transcription of scholastic theology: grace and character are the effects of the sacraments, institution by Christ and the requirements of the minister are causes. The intentions and responsibilities required of the sacramental subject come last, but take only five pages of text, contrasted with seventeen pages on the minister's obligations. This is, of course, due in part to the expected audience of seminarians and priests, but it also reflects the emphasis on clerical power ensuring the *ex opere operato* effect.

Matthias Joseph Scheeben's influential *Dogmatik* (1873–1887) was condensed by Joseph Wilhelm and Thomas Scannell and published in English as 'A Manual of Catholic Theology Based on Scheeben's "*Dogmatik*" ' in 1890 and again in 1906. This work preserved the general Thomistic structure of the manuals, although it includes an explicit treatise on the Church that precedes the sacramental treatise. Scheeben incorporated into the Thomistic framework, however, some historical context on the evolution of key concepts such as 'matter' and 'form', and many direct references to patristic writers. The text thus gives the sense that sacramental theology develops historically, including timeless truths,

and incrementally refined philosophical concepts and theological terminology (Scheeben et al. 1906: 358–377).

Catholic sacramental theology was also defined against Protestant sacramental understandings. For example, Joseph Pohle in *The Sacraments: A Dogmatic Treatise* (1915), begins the treatment of the sacraments in general by contrasting *ex opere operato* efficacy with Protestant Reformers' understandings of sacrament (Pohle 1915: 122). These manuals' sacramental theology was limited to the seven sacraments. This division between sacraments and liturgies was already eroding by 1930, although the full continuity between liturgy, prayer, and sacrament would not be fully incorporated into liturgical studies until the very end of the twentieth century.

(p. 753) The Expansion of the Term 'Sacrament' and the Liturgy

The traditional treatment of sacramental theology in solely neo-scholastic terms of validity and *ex opere operato* effect was challenged first by the liturgical movement and the growing desire for lay participation in the liturgical rites. In the first half of the twentieth century, liturgical theology grew interested in the role of worship in Christian life. Historical and comparative liturgy revealed extensive parallels between sacramental and 'non-sacramental' practices in the early Church and contemporary Eastern rites. Continental philosophy provided new ways of thinking about personhood and language. By mid-century, groundbreaking Church documents, including Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* (1947), and the two Vatican II documents *Sacrosanctum concilium* (1962), and *Lumen gentium* (1964) began to focus on the role of liturgy in Christian spirituality.

During the period before the First World War, several documents promulgated by Pope Pius X encouraged lay participation in the liturgy, especially the Eucharist. The first was *Tra le sollecitudini* (1903), a document on sacred music encouraging the recovery of Gregorian chant. Liturgy, according to this document, is primarily for the strengthening of lay Christians through active participation: 'the faithful gather to gain that [true Christian] spirit from its first and indispensable source: the active participation in the sacred mysteries and the public and solemn prayer of the Church' (*Tra le* Introduction). The restoration of Gregorian chant was 'so that the faithful may again take more active part in ecclesiastical offices, as it did in ancient times' (*Tra le* 3). Pius X also advocated for more widespread lay reception of communion in *Sacra tridentina* (1905) and lowered the age for first communion to seven in *Quam singulari* (1910).

These magisterial documents were swiftly followed by unprecedented works in liturgical theology. Romano Guardini's *Vom Geist der Liturgie* was published in 1918 and first translated into English as *The Spirit of the Liturgy* in 1930. In this work there are four significant departures from nineteenth-century sacramental theology that would prove to be foundational: first, the liturgy is the work of the whole church, priests and laity; second,

the prayers and practice of the liturgy are theological sources; third, the cultural context of liturgy is significant; and fourth, the liturgy is effective through its symbolism.

In the first chapter of Guardini's book, he provides a manifesto on the liturgy as ecclesial, not individual:

> [T]he liturgy is not the expression of the individual's reverence and worship for God. It is not even concerned with the awakening, formation, and sanctification of the individual soul as such… The liturgical entity consists rather of the united body of the faithful as such—the Church… The liturgy is the Church's public and lawful act of worship… In the liturgy God is to be honored by the body of the faithful, and the latter is in its turn to derive sanctification from this act of worship
>
> (Guardini 1998: 19).

(p. 754) Liturgical prayer speaks as 'we' rather than 'I', as early scholastics noted; in making this his starting point, Guardini took a step away from the individual dispositions of priest and subject. Instead, the liturgical action itself unites the faithful in Christ by the Holy Spirit (Guardini 1998: 36–37). The fellowship of the liturgy does not consist in interpersonal intimacy, but in participation in the acts that express their real union (Guardini 1998: 42).

Guardini also uses the liturgy to generate his observations on how the liturgy works: he reflects on the dominance of 'plain' over 'emotional' language, for example, and the significant emphasis on 'actively progressive' prayers, that is, ones that move on to the next part at specified times, rather than litanic prayers that linger over a single response or theme (Guardini 1998: 21–23). These principles lead Guardini to a concern for the cultural context. Individualism, he laments, can prevent modern people from engaging in the corporate task of worship and obscure its character as the Church's act (Guardini 1998: 47). On the other hand, modern culture is not all bad; it prepares people to engage in actively progressive prayers and gives them a taste for the clarity and simplicity of liturgical language (Guardini 1998: 31, 51).

Modernism also encourages people to dichotomize the physical and spiritual realms, which makes it hard to comprehend and participate in symbolic worship. A liturgical symbol 'may be said to originate when that which is interior and spiritual finds expression in that which is exterior and material'. This is not 'by general consent', but rather because 'it is vital and essential' for some spiritual reality to 'transpose itself into material terms' (Guardini 1998: 57). Guardini's emphasis on the realism of liturgical symbol is foundational for the method of liturgical theology, and eventually influenced sacramental theology as well.

Odo Casel (1886–1948), monk of Maria Laach Abbey (Germany) and chaplain of the Herstelle Benedictine women's community, the Abbey of the Holy Cross, reacted against individualism and rationalism by looking to the ancient world. He saw early Christian liturgy as following on the model of the Greek mystery cults, arguing that Jewish worship had

minimal influence on Christian practice. Although later Biblical and liturgical scholarship revealed extensive dependence on Jewish practice, the basic principles of Casel's 'mystery' theology of the liturgy have been very influential, not least on the 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei.*

Casel identifies three meanings of the word 'mystery': the Trinity, the incarnation, and the mystery of the liturgy. The inner reality of the liturgy is participation in the underlying mysteries of the incarnation and the Trinity: 'since Christ is no longer visible among us… [w]e meet his person, his saving deeds, the workings of his grace in the mysteries of his worship' (Casel 1999: 7). This personal encounter, the extension of Christ's incarnation, was extremely influential in the second half of the twentieth century. Because of the breadth of his understanding of effectiveness, Casel could treat other aspects of the liturgy in the same framework as the sacraments: hence *The Mystery of Christian Worship* ends with reflections on the Church year and the daily cycle.

In Casel's theology, the sacraments's effects *ex opere operato* and *ex opere operantis* are reciprocal:

(p. 755)

> Christ's salvation must be made real in us [through] a living, active sharing in the redeeming deed of Christ; passive because the Lord makes it act upon us, active because we share in it by a deed of our own. To the action of God upon us (*opus operatum*) responds our co-operation (*opus operantis*), carried out through grace from him
>
> (Casel 1999: 14).

As a result, Casel highly privileged active participation in the liturgy. The goal of the liturgy was 'liturgical mysticism', facilitated by external symbolic action (Casel 1999: 50). Like Guardini, Casel saw a symbolic unity between the bodily and the spiritual that prefigures the contemporary focus on the liturgical formation of identity.

In *Mediator Dei,* the participation of the laity in worship, especially in the Eucharist, is a prevailing theme of the whole document. This participation 'is the most efficacious means of achieving sanctity' and is the laity's 'chief duty and supreme dignity' (*Mediator* 26, 80). It combines external and internal aspects, and objective (Christological and ecclesial) and subjective (personal) elements. The *ex opere operato* effect is in continuity with the *ex opere operantis* effect of the ministers and recipients of the sacrament, which, in an important development, is here called 'the action of the Church (*ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*)' (*Mediator* 36).

This continuity between external and internal informs the document's language regarding lay participation:

> Jesus Christ burned with zeal for the divine glory; and the offering of His blood upon the cross rose to heaven in an odor of sweetness. To perpetuate this praise, the members of the Mystical Body are united with their divine Head in the eucharistic sacrifice, and with Him, together with the Angels and Archangels, they sing immortal praise to God and give all honor and glory to the Father Almighty.
>
> (*Mediator* 71)

The laity participate in the Eucharist through singing and reception of the sacrament, which are strongly urged, by offering the sacrifice together with the priest in some fashion, and by offering their own lives to God (*Mediator* 193–194, 119, 87, 92). These aspects of *Mediator Dei* reflect the first half of the twentieth century's developments and were enormously influential in the work of Vatican II.

In the 1950s, with the revisions of Holy Week, Rome took another official step towards pastorally effective and participatory rites. During the Middle Ages, the Easter Vigil had changed from a solemn baptismal feast anticipating Christ's triumphant return from death and second coming (as in the early Church) to an unusual Mass held early in the morning on Holy Saturday. Parallel to this development, Holy Week as a whole became reduced, and Lent lost its traditional association with the fast of candidates preparing for baptism. Historical research uncovered these rich baptismal and eschatological associations of Lent and the Triduum (the three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil). Between 1951 and 1955 the Triduum was gradually restored, emphasizing the relationship of Christ's death and resurrection with Christian baptism and restoring a rich complex of symbols, including the procession of the Paschal candle, (p. 756) assembly-held candles, and the blessing of the baptismal water and renewal of baptismal vows, to engage the assembly in vibrant participation in the rite. (For more, including reactions to the changes, see Regan (2012), ch. 4, 'Holy Week'.)

Aemiliana Löhr (1896-1972), a sister in the Herstelle Abbey of the Holy Cross, was deeply inspired by the newly reformed liturgical rites, writing theological reflections on them, an exercise that would become common following Vatican II. Of Löhr's numerous writings, the most comprehensive is *The Mass Through the Year,* published in German in 1955 and translated into English in 1958. It treats each Sunday in the liturgical year, every day of the Lenten season, and the newly revised 1955 Holy Week liturgies, as well as the octaves of Easter and Pentecost. Löhr used the texts (and even melodies) of the liturgies as the primary source for her theology, developing a theology of ecclesial identification with the Lord of the Scriptures.

Löhr's extended treatment of the liturgical year allowed her to develop some aspects of the liturgy that were previously under-emphasized. Eschatology, for example, not only plays a significant role in the theology presented, but is closely tied to incarnation, because the eschatological symbolism of the liturgical year arises from the representation of the mysteries of Christ's life. Similarly, Löhr connects the mysticism proper to liturgical worship to an ethical development that unites soul and body: 'while the [soul] is letting itself be changed according to God's patterns of simplicity as they appear in Christ, it

brings the body with it into new ways of health and purity. [The body] becomes with the unstained body of Christ, “A living, holy sacrifice, pleasing to God, rendering service of good obedience” ’ (Löhr 1958: 1, 79).

Löhr was also attentive to the history of the liturgy and the rich symbolism recovered with the liturgical renewal. With the restoration of Triduum, the Easter Vigil became the ultimate ecclesial participation in the mystery of Christ’s life:

> While all stand and hold their burning candles, themselves lamps, in which Christ’s light glows, the deacon, in the white vestments of joy, goes up on to the ambo, and calls heaven and earth, and the whole people of God, to the festal celebration… One must see and hear this, as it is now again possible to do, at night, the church dark, the press of people. First only the flame of the paschal candle… Then at the third call of *lumen Christi,* the blazing up of the hundreds of candles in the hands of the people… To have once heard and seen this, with the true child-likeness of heart which has kept the capacity to think in images and symbols, is to know the real Christian Pasch.
>
> (Löhr 1958: 2, 46)

Löhr’s work here anticipates a later interest in gesture and ritual, as well as in the necessary preparation for participation in the sacramental symbols. More than a decade later, Photina Rech rendered a liturgical cosmology in similarly magisterial scale in *Inbild des Kosmos* (“The Essence of the Cosmos”).

By the 1950s and continuing into the time of the Second Vatican Council, there were many liturgical theologies which brought non-sacramental liturgy into conversation (p. 757) with the sacramental rites. These works generally relied on the perspective that active participation was the ecclesial body’s entrance into contemplative participation in the saving mystery of Christ. Systematicians began to reconsider the role of sacraments in dogmatics. The contributions of Karl Rahner and Edward Schillebeeckx were influential in the conciliar theology of Vatican II, expressed especially in *Sacrosanctum concilium* (‘The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy’) and *Lumen gentium* (‘The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church’). Rahner advocated a return to the soteriological centre of Thomism together with an acceptance of new philosophies of human personhood, and Schillebeeckx drew on the traditional understanding of the sacraments as extensions of the incarnation of Christ to integrate Christology and sacramental theology. Both were influenced by the work of Otto Semmelroth, who argued that the sacraments were founded on the Church as a sacrament, and receive their defining characteristics as well as their effectiveness from it.

Until 1950, despite the growing interest in liturgical theology and the overlap between liturgy and sacraments, sacramental theology was still generally considered a category in dogmatic theology beginning with the definition of a sacrament as both sign and cause of grace—a definition that categorically set sacraments off from other liturgies. Rahner’s challenge to the structural divisions of dogmatic theology, therefore, had an impact on

sacramental theology as well as other areas of systematics. This challenge was voiced in many essays in which Rahner criticized the isolation of the treatises from one another and from the central truths of salvation. He addressed the renewal of sacramental theology specifically at the very outset of *Theological Investigations* as an example of what would be necessary for dogmatics in the future:

> We should ask ourselves why for instance in the treatise *De Paenitentia* the personal, existential side of the sacramental action usually receives explicit and extended treatments (*De Virtute Paenitentiae*), while in every other sacrament, with a pathetic sense of its obviousness, the treatment of this aspect is supposed to be superfluous, or at most disposed of in a couple of footnotes.
>
> (Rahner 1955: 3)

Rahner's soteriology incorporated a theological anthropology and a theology of creation influenced by existentialism. As a result, he argued that symbolic communication embraces ontological change; 'sign of grace' and 'cause of grace' mean the same thing in the realm of sacrament. Rahner's most important contribution to sacramental theology in general is the essay 'The Theology of the Symbol', which construes 'symbol' as a general property of the existence of beings: 'all beings are by their nature symbolic, because they necessarily "express" themselves in order to attain their own nature' (Rahner 1966: 224). In a word, each being exists by rendering itself present in the world; as existence is always imbued with meaning, this representation is both symbolic and real. Symbolic ontology is grounded fundamentally in the nature of the Trinity, where the Word renders the Father present, first to himself (in the immanent Trinity) and later (p. 758) to the world (in the Incarnation). It can also be seen in the human body, which is an effective means of presence in the world for the soul, and in the Church, which is the effective rendering present of the risen Lord. In each case, the symbol both represents and realizes the reality which constitutes it, and it belongs to the essence of the thing symbolized to be symbolically rendered in such a way. The sacraments, then, are the historical and effective symbolic rendering of God's self-communication. This symbolic ontology, as Rahner saw, allows the causality of sacraments to flow naturally from their character as divine signs, simplifying and enlivening the neo-scholastic structure of sacramental theology. The symbolic function of the sacraments was neither ancillary nor arbitrary, but the very means of their efficacy.

Schillebeeckx, Rahner's contemporary, was working simultaneously on a renewed theology of Christian sacrament. In *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God,* he emphasized the bidirectional encounter implied in sacramentality: a sacrament is, fundamentally, an encounter between God and humanity in which God bestows grace and in which humanity responds with love and worship. This definition allowed Schillebeeckx seamlessly to incorporate the sacramental character of the Church and even of the Incarnation (which includes the bestowal of the Word on the humanity of Jesus and Jesus' human response of ecstatic love and praise) into the structure of a sacramental theology. The result is a theology in which the Incarnation and the Church mediate the ontological gap

between humanity and God, with the seven sacraments recognized by the Catholic Church as particular instruments in that mediation.

Schillebeeckx, like Rahner, thought of his sacramental theology as rooted in Thomism, and also wished to unite the ‘sign’ and ‘cause’ of the sacraments. His brief treatment of the *ex opere operato* effect of the sacraments is both thoroughly Thomistic and revolutionary; in his reading, the absence of the term *ex opere operato* in the *Summa Theologiae* indicates that Thomas ‘found that it was not really needed’, because the sacraments as signs are instrumental causes whose essential effect is determined by God alone (Schillebeeckx 1963: 83).

> *Ex opere operato* therefore means exactly the same as ‘by the power of Christ and God.’ It is the sovereign efficacy of Christ which makes the *opus operatum* itself independent of either the merits of the minister who baptizes or the merits of the one to be baptized.
>
> (Schillebeeckx 1963: 85)

Schillebeeckx follows up on this insight by identifying two effects of each sacrament: an ‘ecclesial effect’ that pertains to the recipient’s participation in the Church’s sacramental encounter with God, and a ‘grace effect’ that pertains to the personal encounter with God. The ecclesial effect is a sacrament (an effective sign) of the grace effect, which follows from the incorporation in the ecclesial community, unless the recipient places an obstacle (*obex*) to the grace involved. The reincorporation of the ecclesial purpose and the personal grace effect of sacraments reinforced the overarching insight that the humanity of Christ and the Church were sacraments, that is, encounters in the world (p. 759) which include the reception of personal grace and the response of loving obedience to God.

Both Schillebeeckx and Rahner, then, restored the systematic and soteriological quality of Thomas’s own work. Their insistence on the adequacy of symbol or sign to carry the full efficacy of sacramental worship, which depends on the significative character of the Church and Christ, opened up the concept of ‘sacrament’ to include more than the seven named sacraments and provided a theological explanation of why a fuller celebration was more desirable than the minimal performance of the required matter, form, and intention. This reorientation of sacramental theology influenced the work of Vatican II as well as the theological work of the rest of the twentieth century and beyond.

Sacrosanctum concilium, the first document released by the Second Vatican Council, is usually remembered for its enormous impact on liturgical practice, but it had important implications for official Catholic sacramental and liturgical theology as well. In the first article, for instance, the council lists the desire ‘to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful’ as the first reason ‘for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy’ (*SC* 1). This link between spirituality and liturgical participation is reiterated throughout the document. Article 48 clarifies and expands the principle of *Mediator Dei* 63: At the Eucharist:

> Christ's faithful… should be instructed by God's word and be nourished at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves as well; through Christ the Mediator, they should be formed day by day into an ever more perfect unity with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all.
>
> (*SC* 48)

This significantly expands the scope of right celebration: 'something more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and lawful celebration; it is also [pastors'] duty to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects' (*SC* 11). The most influential article of the document reads:

> The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people' (1 Pet. 2:9, see 2:4–5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.
>
> In the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else. For it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.
>
> (*SC* 14)

This thorough departure from minimalism gives new weight to the sacramental symbols.

(p. 760) The practical norms exemplify the same principle. The texts of the reformed liturgical rites 'should be marked by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension and as a rule not require much explanation' (*SC* 34). Certain elements of culture which predate a people's conversion to Christianity should be retained and even admitted into the liturgy where it is appropriate. Sacraments, as signs, 'also have a teaching function… They do indeed impart grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them disposes the faithful most effectively to receive this grace in a fruitful manner, to worship God rightly, and to practice charity' (*SC* 59). The liturgical year 'unfolds the whole mystery of Christ', a sentiment reflecting the work of Casel and Löhr (*SC* 102).

The sacramental Christology and ecclesiology of Semmelroth, Rahner, and Schillebeeckx are also reflected: 'It is of the essence of the Church to be both human and divine' (*SC* 2; see also *LG* 1, 9, 48; *GS* 45, which explicitly call the Church a sacrament). Christ's humanity is called 'the instrument of our salvation' (*SC* 5) and liturgical participation is salvific because of Christ's presence in it:

> To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in his Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of his minister… but especially under the eucharistic elements. By his power he is present in the sacraments… He is present in his word… He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings.
>
> (*SC* 7)

As a result, the liturgy 'is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows' (*SC* 10). In Christ, in the Church, and in the liturgy, the document recognizes a bidirectional communication with God which is both significative and effective; this is as evident in the practical norms of the document as in its theological reflection.

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi? A Methodological Discussion

In the decades following the council, numerous books were published on the history and theology of the reformed rites. At the same time, *Sacrosanctum concilium* and the new emphasis on full participation inspired theologians to reflect on how, for whom, and under what conditions liturgy could nourish salvific faith. The adage attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine, *legem credendi statuat lex supplicandi* ('the law of supplication establishes the law of belief') sparked this conversation. In *Mediator Dei,* Pius XII had rejected any interpretation that made the liturgy absolutely determinative of faith, arguing that the law of faith also establishes the law of prayer (*Mediator* 46, 48). This reversal of (p. 761) the maxim may be implied by its traditional abridged form: *lex orandi, lex credendi* ('the law of prayer [is] the law of faith').

Alexander Schmemann, who would go on to be an Orthodox observer at Vatican II, responded with 'Liturgical Theology: Its Task and Method'. In his essay, Schmemann defined liturgical theology as the attempt to 'a) find adequate terms for the faith and the experience of the Church as embodied in her *leiturgia,* b) present this "*lex orandi*" in a theologically consistent form' (Schmemann 1957: 20). His *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (1966), and Methodist Geoffrey Wainwright's *Doxology* (1980) provided significant impetus to the contemporaneous Catholic discussions.

The work of Aidan Kavanagh, especially in *On Liturgical Theology,* framed ensuing Catholic discussion on *lex orandi, lex credendi.* Kavanagh emphatically insisted that the traditional axiom is irreversible: 'liturgical tradition is not merely one theological source among others… [L]iturgical tradition, in whatever Christian idiom, [is] the dynamic condition within which theological reflection is done' (Kavanagh 1975: 7–8). If the liturgy is the entire church's theological reflection, it has a higher authority than works of individual theologians.

Kavanagh points to fourth-century urban liturgies that were ‘an enacted ecclesiology, a realized eschatology’ (Kavanagh 1975: 67). Liturgical theology, in its primary sense, is done not by academic theologians but by Christian assemblies such as those of the fourth century, when they adapt to a God encountered in the liturgy. Kavanagh’s playful identification of ‘Mrs. Murphy and her pastor’ as ‘primary theologians’ has sparked the imagination of many other interpreters to follow (Kavanagh 1975: 146). *Lex credendi,* for Kavanagh, is not doctrinal church teaching, but the human response to the encounter with God embodied in the liturgy. *Lex orandi,* too, is not just liturgical artifacts, ‘creeds and prayers and worship’, but rather ‘rite’, which is ‘a whole style of Christian living found in the myriad particularities of worship, of laws called “canonical”, of ascetical and monastic structures, of evangelical and catechetical endeavors, and in particular ways of doing secondary theological reflection’ (Kavanagh 1975: 100). A rite is a structured system of regularly encountering God in public worship and of responding to the resulting change in communally constructed ways.

Although the conversation about the exact definition of liturgical theology continues, Kavanagh’s work produced widespread conviction that sacramental and liturgical theology needed to attend to the actual practice of the assembly, rather than extrapolate from doctrinal teaching or historical texts alone; and that liturgy, faith, and ethics are inextricably interwoven (see Irwin 2006, Fagerberg 2007, and Mitchell 2006). These beliefs contributed to the further development of sacramental and liturgical theology.

Symbol, Language, and Body

While the *lex orandi, lex credendi* discussion debated whether creeds shape rites or rites shape creeds, from around 1978 to the end of the twentieth century sacramental and (p. 762) liturgical theology have shifted to consider liturgy’s role in shaping the identity of those who practise it: liturgical practitioners’ self-understanding. Three noteworthy developments in this direction can be seen in the work of dozens of different interpreters: the interconnection of liturgy and ethics; the careful examination of experiential liturgical practice, and in some cases the use of ritual theory, to understand rites; and the use of postmodern continental philosophy, especially its discussions of language and gift. These developments are linked by an emphasis on the symbolic and embodied character of sacraments. Implementing the conceptual breakthroughs from earlier theologians, late twentieth-century liturgical theologians examined the postconciliar reformed rites as *theologia prima*, expounding their meaning and offering recommendations on their effective practice. Although theologies from a particular ecclesial perspective remained the norm, bilateral and multilateral ecumenical dialogues contextualized them. The work of the World Council of Churches, especially the 1982 document of consensus among the churches entitled *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry,* was especially influential.

Liturgical theologies of the late 1970s and early 1980s relied on the historical development of liturgical symbols to determine their meaning, but also took note of the social sciences, ethics, and the human contexts of liturgy (see, for example, Power and Maldonado

1979; Maldonado and Power 1980; Searle 1980b). Only a few representative examples can be offered here. The final issue of *Worship* in 1978 was devoted to the notion of the liturgy as an act of language, an idea that would continue to be important beyond 2000. Mark Searle exemplified these attempts to contextualize contemporary liturgical practice in 'The Journey of Conversion': conversion is a change of identity, necessitates a holistic change of perspective, which is facilitated by the symbolic ritual performance of liturgy. For Searle, however, liturgy experienced as ritual can also *fail* to be transformative, an illustration of the distance between the sacramental theology of 1900 and that of 1980 (Searle 1980a: 50–55). In 'New Tasks, New Methods: The Emergence of Pastoral Liturgical Studies', Searle made a more comprehensive call for a study of the actual practice of Catholic liturgy in order to ensure the effectiveness of the performance of sacramental symbols, and in the extensive study of American Catholic parish life conducted by the Notre Dame Institute for Church Life, he tried to provide the empirical context necessary to understand one region's cultural appropriation of sacramental symbols, as well as its failures (Searle 1983). The methods called 'pastoral' by Searle are often included under the category of 'ritual studies' in later works.

Further developments in method, using these new disciplinary perspectives, included the broadening of 'liturgy' to consider rites and sacramental symbols that had not been considered relevant in earlier generations and the broadening of liturgists to consider the interpretations of marginalized worshippers, especially women. Mary Collins merged the descriptive and normative aspects of liturgical theology by asking, 'Is the faith vision being celebrated in the liturgy adequate?' Examining the symbolic, cultural, economic, and gendered context of bread and meals, Collins argued that Eucharistic celebrations instantiate a hierarchically ordered embodiment of Christ, in which 'maleness' corresponds to Christ's eminence and 'femaleness' to his lowliness (Collins 1979). Nathan D. Mitchell used a similar emphasis on contextual interpretation to blur the lines (p. 763) between 'sacrament', 'liturgy', and 'popular religion', noting that all are interdependent forms of Christian cultural formation. Mitchell was also influenced by research into the historical development of the Gospels, going significantly beyond the traditional question of sacramental institution (see Mitchell 1982, 1994.) Mitchell's *Liturgy and the Social Sciences* presented anthropological sources that went beyond ritual as 'meaningful' to ritual as 'transformative', emphasizing the distinctive role of the body in liturgy (Mitchell 1999). Mary Margaret Kelleher developed a specifically theological branch of the participant observer method of contemporary anthropology, allowing ritual studies to be fully integrated into theological studies (Kelleher 1988). Catherine Mowry LaCugna argued for the inclusion of liturgy as a source for systematics, especially for Trinitarian theology (LaCugna 1989).

Another group of interpreters used the new definition of 'liturgical theologian' and the attention to real practice and its context to argue for more attention to the experiences of worship among marginalized groups. Collins continued to be active in this work, for example in *Women at Prayer* and *Contemplative Participation*. David N. Power argued that sacraments should challenge human assumptions about God and one another, and marginalized groups have a special hermeneutical insight (Power 1998). Teresa Berger's book

Women's Ways of Worship included historical and theological contributions of women in the liturgical movement often overlooked by 'authoritative' histories. These dimensions of liturgical theology have continued to be explored into the twenty-first century, not only by these commentators but also by others, including Susan Ross, Bruce Morrill, Siobhán Garrigan, Diana Hayes, and Katharine Harmon.

Sacramental theologies treating the sacraments in general also took note of these developments. The work of Edward Kilmartin and Louis-Marie Chauvet were particularly significant. Kilmartin's *Christian Liturgy I: Theology and Practice* argued that sacraments have a 'depth dimension' reachable by faith as well as a human dimension subject to historical and cultural influence (Kilmartin 1988: 18). Sacraments work theologically to the extent that they work liturgically as symbols to which human persons are culturally and spiritually attuned; he was especially critical of the weak pneumatology of Western sacramental theology, and thought a broader Christology would be a corrective. In the procession model of the Trinity, the Word proceeds from the Father and the Spirit from the Father and the Son. The Incarnate Word is the principle of incarnation, so the Holy Spirit, in both the hypostatic union and the sacraments, appears to be superfluous. Kilmartin argued for supplementing Western Christology with a bestowal model, in which the Holy Spirit plays an integral role in sanctifying the human nature taken from Mary, 'elevating that humanity to union with the Word who assumes it'. The bestowal model helps explain how the personal grace of Christ can be shared with Christians:

> This same Spirit, sent by the risen Lord from the Father, unites ordinary persons with the Son and thus makes them sons and daughters of the Father in the unique Son. Here the grace of Christ, the grace he shares with the justified human persons, is identified as the one Holy Spirit.
>
> (Kilmartin 1988: 162)

(p. 764) It is in this context that Kilmartin understood the modes of Christ's presence in the liturgy, which are pneumatologically effected on analogy with the incarnation; they become complementary means of the union of the risen Lord with the Church (Kilmartin 1988: 303–355). Attempts to expand the pneumatology of Western sacramental theology continue.

Louis-Marie Chauvet's *Symbol and Sacrament* attended to postmodern philosophy as well as anthropology, and saw Christian ethics, the life of agape, as the 'veri-fication' of liturgical practice. Chauvet critiqued the causality of scholastic sacramental theology, built on an 'onto-theology' that assumed God is primarily known as the First Mover, rather than as the Other in a relationship (Chauvet 1995: 7). Phenomenology and symbol provide a corrective by being grounded in the experience of human language, which is inescapably tied to relationality and to the formation of identity. In any ritual, language changes subjects; in this sense it 'purports to work *ex opere operato* in some fashion… *that which is truly said is that which is done*' (Chauvet 1995: 325). This change of identity, accomplished through a symbolic exchange of gifts, includes a real ethical obligation that goes beyond liturgical practice. In fact, Christian identity, for Chauvet, is constituted by the

mutual support of scriptural interpretation, sacramental celebration, and ethical practice (Chauvet 1995: 161–265).

The sacraments transform human identity by shaping Christian perception of the world to reflect the Paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. The paradox of a God who dies on a cross reveals a God characterized not by transformative power but by transformative powerlessness: 'the face of God show[s] itself only by erasing itself' (Chauvet 1995: 74). Christian ethics is thus also paradoxical and Paschal: human persons can only become themselves by giving themselves away in self-abandoning love for the other. Both God's salvific action in the world and the sacramentally formed character of Christian identity are marked by the idea that presence is mediated through absence, or that the 'possession' of the sacred is rendered possible only in an act of 'dis-possession' like that of Christ on the cross. The divine is found in the lowly: 'the most "spiritual" happens through the most "corporeal" ' (Chauvet 1995: 146). Chauvet's presentation of this Paschal theology of sacrament has been very influential.

Conclusion

The twentieth century was a tumultuous time, in which liturgical practice and theology both altered drastically among Roman Catholics, and in which the relationship between the two was subject to question. The movement away from minimalist definitions of sacramental validity led to a renewed sacramental practice as well as to an interpretive tradition that used liturgical practice and cultural context to understand the Church's beliefs. Ritual theory and the challenge of articulating identity through language, gift, and the body, will no doubt exert increased influence in the century to come. The traditional understanding of sacramental liturgy as the salvific work of (p. 765) God and the responsive work of the Church, however, is the foundation of these new perspectives.

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Biblical Interpretation since *Divino afflante Spiritu*

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This chapter treats Catholic biblical interpretation since Pius XII's encyclical Divino afflante Spiritu (1943). At the heart of the chapter is Vatican II's teaching in its constitution Dei verbum. This text promoted an account of revelation as a multifaceted reality, and outlined a rounded account of biblical interpretation that endorsed some styles of modern historical critical analysis while insisting that Scripture should be interpreted in the light of a knowledge of what God intended to convey through Scripture. The chapter then considers how two key documents of the Pontifical Biblical Commission develop this teaching, and ways in which post-conciliar debates have continued to explore persistent challenges and tensions. Significant space is given to Pope Benedict XVI's reflections on these debates. A final section suggests an agenda for the future development of Catholic exegesis.

Keywords: exegesis, interpretation, hermeneutics, Vatican II, Benedict XVI, Scripture, historical criticism

Divino afflante Spiritu

PIUS XII's encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* (1943) is widely acknowledged to mark a turning point in the modern history of Catholic exegesis. Since the late nineteenth century, the Church's confrontation with rationalism and modernism had led to a defensive stance towards biblical criticism. Through a series of decisions issued by the Pontifical Biblical Commission (formed in 1902), the Church had obliged Catholic scholars to reject certain new hypotheses regarding the historicity, authorship, and integrity of the biblical texts.

But by the mid-twentieth century the situation had changed. The modernist threat had receded and the renewal in patristic and liturgical studies had begun to show the positive fruit of critical methods. In *Divino afflante*, Pius strongly endorsed the study of Scripture in the original languages and the use of textual, linguistic, historical, and literary exegetical methods. He emphasized the primacy of Scripture's literal sense, while at the same time reaffirming the value of more-than-literal senses. In the years following the encycli-

cal, Catholic scholars wasted no time catching up with their Protestant peers in the biblical academy—joining academic guilds, publishing learned volumes, launching journals, and taking up chairs of biblical studies at Catholic and secular universities. Catholic exegetes such as Ceslas Spicq, Rudolf Schnackenburg, Luis Alonso Schökel, Roland Murphy, Raymond Brown, and Joseph Fitzmyer (all priests) earned international acclaim in their field.

(p. 768) The Second Vatican Council

A second turning point came with the Second Vatican Council, which promulgated its *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* (*Dei Verbum*) in 1965. *Dei Verbum* covers the broader topic of divine revelation, but with significant implications for biblical interpretation. The document was the product of lengthy debates and six major phases of revision during the years of the council. Its final version was a model of the council's goal of *ressourcement*—a return to the biblical, patristic, and liturgical sources of Christian faith.

Dei Verbum freed the notion of revelation from the narrow, propositional view that had prevailed in earlier twentieth-century theology and retrieved a more comprehensive biblical understanding. Rather than speaking of revealed truth in terms of discrete doctrinal statements, *Dei Verbum* speaks of the personal *self*-communication of the living God, who acts in history and seeks a relationship with human beings. Drawing on the patristic notion of the economy of salvation, it affirms that God's revelation takes place through words and deeds having an intrinsic unity. 'The deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them' (*DV* 2). Revelation culminates in the sending of the Son, who is himself the fullness of all that the Father has to say. Thus revelation is a multidimensional reality that cannot be reduced to its verbal or conceptual expression. *Dei Verbum* also moved away from earlier formulations in which Scripture and tradition were viewed as 'two sources' of revelation. Instead it speaks of 'one sacred deposit of the Word of God' (*DV* 10) that is transmitted in two ways and is authentically interpreted by the Church's magisterium.

In its chapter on biblical inspiration and interpretation, *Dei Verbum* reaffirms the traditional doctrine of inspiration (*DV* 11–13). Having been written under the influence of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16), the sacred texts have God as their author. However, this is not to be understood in the mechanistic way envisioned by some of the fathers and medievals. The hagiographers are not mere instruments but genuine authors who made use of their own powers and abilities such that they wrote all that God intended and nothing else. *Dei Verbum* recalls the patristic analogy by which Scripture is compared to the incarnation of Christ: 'For the words of God expressed in human language have been made like human discourse, just as the Word of the eternal Father, when he took to himself the flesh of human weakness, was in every way made like men' (*DV* 11).

The most highly contested part of the document was its statement on biblical inerrancy. The progress of historical criticism had intensified the problem of apparent errors of historical, geographic, or scientific detail in the Bible. Various theologians had proposed limiting the extent of inspiration such that some texts present divinely revealed truth and others do not. In its final statement the council reaffirmed inerrancy but without fully resolving the question of how it is to be applied:

(p. 769)

> Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures
>
> (*DV* 11).

By qualifying biblical truth as 'for the sake of our salvation', the council sought to indicate the aspect under which biblical truth is to be considered (Dulles 2002) while at the same time rejecting the restrictive view of inerrancy (the footnotes to the statement cite *Providentissimus Deus* 20–21 and *Divino afflante Spiritu* 3).

Biblical interpretation is necessarily governed by one's view of biblical inspiration. Thus *Dei Verbum* sets out hermeneutical principles for properly taking into account Scripture's nature as both human and divine. First, the interpreter should seek to ascertain what the human author(s) truly intended to affirm. This entails study of the literary genres used at the time, the cultural and historical contexts, and the characteristic modes of thought and speech in the biblical world. The recognition that Scripture includes diverse genres of literature—not only historical narrative but poetry, prophecy, prayer, parables, legislation, and so on—is crucial for overcoming a wooden literalism by which biblical texts are judged according to modern notions of science and historiography. Second, since 'Scripture must be read and interpreted in accord with the same Spirit by which it was written' (*DV* 12), the interpreter must seek to discover what God intended to communicate by means of the human words. This requires taking into account the content and unity of the entire canon of Scripture, the living tradition of the Church, and the analogy of faith, that is, according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 'the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation' (*CCC* 114).

Dei Verbum's approach to the Old Testament is surprisingly traditional. Citing Augustine's axiom, 'the New Testament is hidden in the Old and the Old is made manifest in the New', it affirms the permanent value of the Old Testament books but emphasizes that their primary purpose was to prepare for the coming of Christ through prophecy and typology (*DV* 15). The literal sense also remains valid, since besides recounting the history of salvation it contains sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom for human life, and a treasury of prayers. Alluding to the problem of violence and immorality in the Old Testa-

ment, *Dei Verbum* acknowledges that these texts 'also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary' (*DV* 15).

In its New Testament section, *Dei Verbum* vigorously asserts the historical reliability of the Gospels, which 'faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ … really did and taught' (*DV* 19). At the same time, it acknowledges that the evangelists' work included selection and synthesis of material in view of theological and pastoral ends. This was done, however, 'in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus' (*DV* 19). The document also maintains the Gospels' 'apostolic origin', not to be understood in terms of strictly literary authorship by one of the apostles but in terms of a foundation in the apostolic preaching.

Finally, *Dei Verbum* strongly insists on the need for a deeper engagement with Scripture on the part of all Catholics, both clerical and laypeople, declaring that the (p. 770) Church 'has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the Body of the Lord' (*DV* 21). The integration of biblical studies with theology is especially urgent, since 'the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology' (24). The reading of Scripture must be accompanied by prayer, since the Bible is not a dead letter from the past but a living word in which 'the Father who is in heaven meets his children with great love and speaks with them' (*DV* 21).

Dei Verbum's interpretive guidelines have had a mixed impact on post-Vatican II Catholic biblical scholarship. The document's affirmation of the historical and literary tools necessary for discovering the human author's intention has been enthusiastically embraced and has led to greater realism and nuance in the use of biblical texts. But its insistence that interpretation is not complete until one discovers what God wanted to communicate through the sacred text has often been ignored in practice, if not denied in principle. Its concept of inspiration, which seems to envision a single author for each book, is not easily integrated with modern theories about the formation of biblical texts through complex stages of oral and written transmission (Lohfink 1997; Fastiggi 2010). There has been much debate and no consensus on how the inerrancy statement is to be applied (Levering 2010). Both the affirmation of the Old Testament's primary purpose as a witness to Christ and of the Gospels' historical reliability are in tension with the claims of much contemporary exegesis (e.g. Collins 1990).

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was published in 1992. Its section on Scripture (*CCC* 101–141) relies heavily on *Dei Verbum*, with one notable exception. Whereas *Dei Verbum* made no mention of the traditional doctrine of the four senses of Scripture, the *Catechism* affirms it, citing Thomas Aquinas's classic formulation. The literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis; the spiritual sense is that which is in turn signified by the realities and events of which Scripture speaks. The *Catechism* goes on to quote the well-known medieval couplet: 'The Letter speaks of deeds; Allegory to faith; The Moral how to act; Anagogy our destiny' (*CCC* 118).

The Pontifical Biblical Commission

In 1971 Pope Paul VI changed the status of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, reconstituting it as consultative body rather than an organ of the magisterium. The new commission consists of twenty Catholic biblical exegetes recognized as experts in the field, under the leadership of the prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. Its task is to provide expert advice to the magisterium on topics of current importance regarding the Bible and its interpretation. In the last half century, the commission has published several major documents: *The Historicity of the Gospels* (1964), *Sacred Scripture and Christology* (1984), *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993), *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* (2001), *The Bible and Morality: Biblical Roots of Christian Conduct* (2008), and *The Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture* (2014).

(p. 771) The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church

In *Interpretation*, the commission further develops the principles expressed in *Dei Verbum* in light of new approaches to biblical interpretation. The commission's expressed goals were to defend historical criticism from those who questioned its validity and, more broadly, to indicate interpretive principles adequate to the Bible's character as both human and divine. In its first part, the document surveys various modes of interpretation, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each. It gives a privileged place to historical criticism, which it describes as 'the indispensable method for the scientific study of the meaning of ancient texts' (*Interpretation* I.A). It acknowledges, however, that historical criticism is not sufficient in itself since it is seeks only the meaning of the biblical text within its historical context and is not concerned with later possibilities of meaning. Moreover, historical criticism must be dissociated from certain errors commonly associated with it, including historicism, insufficient attention to the final form of the text, and hidden presuppositions contrary to faith. *Interpretation* then discusses other forms of interpretation: literary analysis (rhetorical, narrative, semiotic analyses), approaches based on tradition (canonical, Jewish, and history-of-interpretation studies) or on the human sciences (sociology, anthropology, psychology), and contextual approaches (liberationist and feminist interpretation). Finally, the document describes fundamentalist interpretation, that which reads all the details of a text literally—the only approach of which the commission gives an unqualified negative assessment.

In its second part, *Interpretation* discusses new issues that have arisen since the development of philosophical hermeneutics. Most importantly, it affirms the now-recognized principle that all interpretation is necessarily a subjective activity involving the exegete's own pre-understanding. Since the goal of biblical exegesis is not merely to grasp the meaning of the text but 'to arrive at the reality of which the language speaks' (*Interpretation* II.A. 1), a full understanding is only granted to one who has an affinity with the reality of which Scripture speaks. This implies the need for the light of the Holy Spirit and a lived faith in communion with the Church. 'As the reader matures in the life of the Spirit, so

there grows also his or her capacity to understand the realities of which the Bible speaks' (*Interpretation* II.A.2).

Interpretation considers carefully the traditional distinction between the literal and spiritual senses. Its definition of the literal sense partly echoes the language of *Divino afflante* 26: 'the literal sense is that which has been expressed directly by the inspired human authors' (*Interpretation* II.B.1). By speaking of what the writer 'expressed' rather than what he 'intended', the document avoids the problem of seeking meaning in the author's subjective, psychological intention to which we have no direct access. The commission also noted that even in their literal sense many texts, such as the royal psalms, have a 'dynamic aspect' that carries the reader beyond their original historical circumstances.

The commission's description of the spiritual sense is innovative and reflects a concern to reconceive the traditional notion in terms acceptable to modern hermeneutics. The spiritual sense is defined as 'the meaning expressed by the biblical texts when read (p. 772) under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in the context of the paschal mystery of Christ and of the new life which flows from it' (*Interpretation* II.B.2). Such a meaning results from the radically new context established by the paschal mystery, which 'sheds fresh light upon the ancient texts and causes them to undergo a change in meaning'. Somewhat confusingly, the document cites God's promise of an everlasting kingdom to David (2 Sam. 7:12–13), which in Christ 'must now be taken literally', as an instance of *spiritual* interpretation. The commission goes on to state that in Old Testament texts that already have a religious or spiritual meaning, the spiritual sense is identical with the literal sense, which seems to be in tension with its earlier reference to 'a change in meaning'. This is also a departure from the traditional notion of 'spiritual sense' as a technical term denoting a hidden, Christological meaning that is discernable only in light of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Finally, the document adds a new category proposed by modern exegetes: the 'fuller sense' (*sensus plenior*), a meaning intended by God but not clearly expressed by the human author, such as the 'young woman' of Isa. 7:14 read as a reference to the Virgin Mary. The fuller sense, then, refers to the spiritual sense wherever it is not identical to the literal sense.

The third and fourth parts of *Interpretation* offer principles that situate Catholic biblical interpretation within a thoroughly ecclesial context. Authentic interpretation takes place within the living tradition of the Church from which the Scriptures were born. It thus takes account of the liturgy, the writings of saints and fathers, and the teaching of the magisterium. However, it avoids naively attributing to biblical texts a meaning that is actually the product of later theological development. Biblical interpretation must maintain its character as a truly theological discipline. Although exegesis and systematic theology are distinct, there must be a constant interaction and mutual enrichment between the two. Not only scholars but all members of the faithful, clerical and lay, have a role in interpreting Scripture through their prayer and study of the text. The magisterium exercises a role of final interpretive authority where occasion requires it. Finally, exegesis is not complete until it leads to actualization, that is, the explanation of the text's meaning as

God's word for today, and inculturation, that is, its translation and embodiment into diverse human cultures.

Interpretation has been hailed as the most comprehensive statement to date on authentically Catholic biblical interpretation. It places exegesis squarely on a theological and ecclesial footing and reaffirms both the primacy of the literal sense and the legitimacy of more-than-literal senses. Commentators have, however, pointed to some weaknesses in the document. For instance, its endorsement of historical criticism seems excessively sanguine, glossing over problematic assumptions that often accompany the method and that many scholars consider intrinsic to it (Williamson 2001). It tends to put various interpretive methods side by side without a real integration (Ayres and Fowl 1999). Its explanation of the non-literal senses does not sufficiently account for the traditional understanding of the spiritual sense as a property not of texts but of history, explicable only in terms of the divine economy of salvation by which God ordered human events in stages towards their fulfilment in Christ (Healy 2010). It maintains a distinction between the spiritual sense and typology that has been criticized by de Lubac (p. 773) (2000) and others. Finally, the document fails to address the doctrine of biblical inspiration and its relationship to interpretation.

The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible

In its 2001 document the commission takes up two important topics not treated in *Dei Verbum*: namely, the role of Jewish exegesis in Christian interpretation today and problems regarding the portrayal of Jews in the New Testament. It also seeks to provide a more comprehensive account of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments.

The Jewish People sets out to revision the Catholic doctrine of the unity of the two testaments. Like *Interpretation*, it endorses the New Testament's Christological reading of the Old Testament, which it describes as 'retrospective rereadings through Christian eyes' (*Jewish People* 21). At the same time it criticizes later 'allegorical' readings that were characteristic of the fathers and the medievals. The document focuses on the unity of the testaments primarily in terms of shared fundamental themes such as the revelation of God and of the human person, election, covenant, law, prayer, divine reproaches, and promises. The analysis of these themes reveals both a fundamental continuity and certain aspects of discontinuity. The aspects of continuity highlight the ongoing need for Christian scholars to avail themselves of the insights of post-biblical Jewish exegesis.

The Jewish People demonstrates that to interpret the New Testament as anti-Jewish is unwarranted for several reasons. First, these texts were written by Jews and the apostolic Church was itself entirely Jewish. Second, their sharp criticism of certain Jewish groups and practices stands squarely within the biblical prophetic tradition of indictment of the sins of Israel, and must be read in the context of the dynamism of God's love for his people. Third, the New Testament unambiguously affirms God's continued election of and commitment to Israel. Finally, 'Real anti-Jewish feeling, that is, an attitude of contempt,

hostility and persecution of the Jews as Jews, is not found in any New Testament text and is incompatible with its teaching' (*Jewish People* 87).

The document makes an important contribution to Jewish–Christian dialogue and to the proper understanding of New Testament texts concerning the Jews. It strongly reaffirms the divine authority of the Jewish Scriptures and the Church's permanent dependence on them. 'Without the Old Testament, the New Testament would be an incomprehensible book, a plant deprived of its roots and destined to dry up and wither' (*Jewish People* 84). The document has, however, been criticized for setting up a double track of meaning for the Old Testament, one Jewish and one Christian. Its insistence on Jewish and Christian readings as 'analogous, parallel, and irreducible' (*Jewish People* 22) seems to imply that the covenant with Israel and the new covenant in Christ are two parallel ways to salvation, and that the gospel is thus not addressed to Jews (Kereszty 2002). Its description of the mystery of Christ as in 'continuity with' and 'conformity to' the Jewish Scriptures, and its description of the spiritual sense as a 'retrospective rereading,' does not do full justice to the Christian notion of fulfilment (Farkasfalvy 2008).

(p. 774) Both *Interpretation* and *Jewish People* take significant steps forward in clarifying the question of how to credibly integrate the Church's exegetical heritage, especially its Christological interpretation of the Old Testament, with the advances of modern critical scholarship. But the problem remains far from resolved.

Post-Conciliar Exegesis

The period following Vatican II has seen both exegetes and theologians raising new questions regarding the premises and results of contemporary exegesis. If much has been gained in the abandonment of earlier naiveté and the embrace of critical methods, has something also been lost? Why do the results of contemporary biblical scholarship often seem incapable of nourishing Christian faith and life? Why do theologians so rarely avail themselves of the fruits of biblical research? Does the patristic tradition of biblical interpretation really need to be abandoned wholesale? In both Catholic and Protestant biblical scholarship, recent decades have been a time of re-examination, of dissatisfaction, and of hope for a retrieval of what has been neglected while building on what has been gained.

Benedict XVI

Benedict XVI showed more interest in the Bible than any pope since patristic times. When he was elected in 2005, Ratzinger had already spent more than half a century as a theologian whose work was articulated in distinctively biblical terms. From the beginning of his career he showed an intense interest in questions of hermeneutics, and made the integration of theology and exegesis one of his chief goals. As prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1981–2005), he continued to follow closely developments in biblical scholarship. In 1988, Ratzinger delivered a widely noted lecture on 'The Crisis in Biblical Interpretation', in which he called for deeper examination of the philosophical founda-

tions of exegesis. Modern biblical criticism had promised to deliver strictly objective knowledge of ancient Israel, Jesus, and the early Church by methodologically excluding faith as a bias. Yet, he argued, this exclusion is itself a bias that precludes understanding these texts on their own terms. It has led to a dissection of the biblical text into disconnected fragments expressing disparate theologies and ideologies. In fact, he claimed, the critical methods are not *self*-critical enough. Underlying these supposedly neutral methods are often unexamined and highly dubious philosophical premises. Instead, exegesis must acknowledge a hermeneutic of faith, which 'does not do dogmatic violence to the Bible, but precisely allows the solitary possibility for the Bible to be itself' (Ratzinger 2008: 126).

(p. 775) As pope, Benedict demonstrated the high priority of fostering a biblical renewal, especially by choosing as the theme of the 2008 World Synod of Bishops 'The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church', and by continuing work on his three-volume work of biblical Christology, *Jesus of Nazareth* (Benedict XVI 2007, 2011, 2012).

Verbum Domini

At the 2008 synod over 250 bishops, along with numerous lay experts and 'fraternal delegates' met daily for three weeks to discuss the Bible, its interpretation, and its role in the life of the Church. Then bishops formally presented the pope with the results of their deliberations. Benedict's post-synodal apostolic exhortation, which appeared two years later under the title *Verbum Domini*, is the most authoritative Catholic document on Scripture since *Dei Verbum*. Although *Verbum Domini* does not contain anything radically new or unexpected, it does confirm and extend the biblical reorientation that began at Vatican II. It is simultaneously a call for Catholic theology, preaching, catechesis, and spirituality to become more biblical, and for Catholic biblical scholarship to become more ecclesial.

Verbum Domini builds on the doctrine of Scripture presented in *Dei Verbum*. Scripture is not just one of many forms in which God's word is communicated, alongside preaching, catechesis, liturgical celebrations, and so on, but contains the divine word 'in an altogether singular way' (*Verbum* 17). Benedict draws an analogy between Christ's eucharistic presence and his presence in the biblical word:

> Christ, truly present under the species of bread and wine, is analogously present in the word proclaimed in the liturgy. A deeper understanding of the sacramentality of God's word can thus lead us to a more unified understanding of the mystery of revelation'
>
> (*Verbum* 56).

The pope does not hesitate to use the terms 'word of God' and 'sacred Scripture' interchangeably, while making clear that 'Word of God' refers first and foremost to the Person of Jesus Christ, and then analogously to divine revelation in all its modes—through cre-

ation itself, through salvation history, through the preaching of the prophets and apostles, and as handed down in the Church's Scripture and living tradition.

In its section on biblical interpretation *Verbum Domini* reiterates principles expressed by Vatican II and the Biblical Commission, including the properly ecclesial setting of biblical interpretation, the interpretive authority of the magisterium, the unity of the two testaments, and the need to transcend the literal sense. The pope explicitly declined to resolve the question of how to interpret *Dei Verbum*'s statement on inerrancy, probably discerning that discussion on the issue still needs time to mature. However, there are three areas of significant new emphasis.

First, *Verbum Domini* insists emphatically on the need for a hermeneutic of faith, quoting St Thomas's striking statement, 'the letter, even that of the Gospel, would kill, (p. 776) were there not the inward grace of healing faith' (*Verbum* 29). The premise of much modern biblical scholarship is that faith and objectivity are inversely proportional: the more faith, the less objectivity, and vice versa. But as noted above, contemporary hermeneutics had already shown that the ideal of a purely neutral exegesis is an illusion. Every interpreter has a perspective, a set of fundamental presuppositions that guide interpretation. If, then, one systematically excludes Judeo-Christian faith—that faith within which the Scriptures were written—one substitutes not neutrality but rather an alien set of presuppositions.

> The lack of a hermeneutic of faith with regard to Scripture entails more than a simple absence; in its place there inevitably enters another hermeneutic, a positivistic and *secularized hermeneutic* ultimately based on the conviction that the Divine does not intervene in human history. According to this hermeneutic, whenever a divine element seems present, it has to be explained in some other way, reducing everything to the human element
>
> (*Verbum* 35).

This leads to interpretations that deny the historicity of miracles and other divine interventions in history. The result is that 'Scripture ends up being *a text belonging only to the past* … exegesis is no longer truly theological, but becomes pure historiography, history of literature (*Verbum* 35).

Such a misguided approach, Benedict contends, has contributed to the growing gulf between theology and exegesis. Exegetes study Scripture without concern for doctrine, and theologians study doctrine with only superficial reference to its biblical roots. But as theology becomes unmoored from the Bible, it is cut off from its own foundations. 'In a word, where exegesis is not theology, Scripture cannot be the soul of theology, and conversely, where theology is not essentially the interpretation of Scripture within the Church, such a theology no longer has a foundation' (*Verbum* 35). Embedded in this statement is a definition of theology that is deeply rooted in Christian tradition: theology is 'essentially the interpretation of Scripture within the Church', that is, within the living community of faith that gave birth to Scripture and in which the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Scrip-

tures is still at work. Only where a hermeneutic of faith is recovered can both exegesis and theology be restored to what they truly are.

The second noteworthy emphasis, which grounds the first, is on the profound harmony between faith and reason. Some biblical scholars fear that bringing explicit faith into exegesis short-circuits critical investigation and results in reading arbitrary, accommodated meanings into the texts. But Benedict insists that the hermeneutic of faith does not exclude but rather *requires* historical and literary research of the highest calibre, by the very fact that divine revelation takes place in history. Faith is not a rejection of reason but a light that illuminates and broadens reason and all its exegetical tools. Faith 'never degenerates into fideism, which in the case of Scripture would end up in fundamentalism. On the other hand, it calls for a reason which, in its investigation of the historical elements present in the Bible, is marked by openness and does not reject a priori anything beyond its own terms of reference' (*Verbum* 36).

(p. 777) Third, Benedict goes beyond the *Catechism*'s retrieval of the doctrine of the four senses by insisting that discernment of the spiritual sense is not merely a matter of cataloguing verbal correspondences but of being drawn into the text's own movement. In words reminiscent of de Lubac's description of patristic exegesis, the pope states that 'the *passage from letter to spirit* … is not an automatic, spontaneous passage; rather, the letter needs to be transcended'. Biblical interpretation, then:

> is never purely an intellectual process but also a lived one, demanding full engagement in the life of the Church, which is life 'according to the Spirit' (Gal. 5:16). … There is an inner drama in this process, since the passage that takes place in the power of the Spirit inevitably engages each person's freedom
>
> (*Verbum* 38).

The conclusion, which challenges the assumptions of much biblical scholarship today, is that exegesis can never be purely a matter of method or technique; it necessarily engages the interpreter existentially.

Finally, *Verbum Domini* directly, if briefly, addresses the problem of the 'dark' passages of the Bible, that is, those that depict disturbing violence or immorality. It suggests that the primary way to deal with such texts is to recognize the progressive nature of biblical revelation, rooted as it is in human history. God's plan unfolds slowly and gradually, '*in successive stages* and despite human resistance'. Although the Old Testament often depicts lies, trickery, sexual irresponsibility, and massacre without explicitly denouncing such acts as evil, it must also be kept in mind that the prophets later 'vigorously challenged every kind of injustice and violence, whether collective or individual' (*Verbum* 42). Difficult texts must be interpreted properly within their historical context and in light of their ultimate hermeneutic key, Christ, and his new commandment of love.

Jesus of Nazareth

Jesus of Nazareth manifests Benedict's concern to not only theorize but also provide a model of exegesis that integrates the tools of modern scholarship with robust faith in Scripture as a living word from God. The foreword to the first volume outlines his interpretive programme. Having observed the twentieth century's widening gap between the 'Jesus of history' and the 'Christ of faith', Benedict aims to bring to light anew the Jesus of the Gospels precisely as the real Jesus. He regards the historical-critical method as indispensible because 'it is of the very essence of biblical faith to be about real historical events' and not 'stories symbolizing suprahistorical truths' (Benedict XVI 2007: xv). On the other hand, this method does not exhaust the interpretive task. It must open itself to complementary methods and especially to the 'Christological hermeneutic' that recognizes Christ as the interpretive key to all Scripture.

Benedict makes interpretive moves that would be considered illegitimate in many biblical circles. For instance, he synthesizes reflections based on each of the four Gospels (and even Paul) into a coherent whole rather than only considering the Christology of (p. 778) each evangelist separately. He consciously interprets the Gospels from within the living tradition of the Church, rather than as a neutral bystander. And he takes as the purpose of his biblical investigations that both he and his readers might encounter Jesus and grow in friendship with him. Yet he also takes seriously questions of history and the gradual development in the early Church's understanding. The result is a reflection in which each detail of the Gospel accounts opens up unexpected theological depths.

The book was deliberately written not as a magisterial document but as the work of a biblical theologian subject to critique. Indeed it has been criticized on various hermeneutical and exegetical grounds, but it stands as an important model of the fruitfulness of applying the interpretive principles taught by Vatican II, the Pontifical Biblical Commission, and the former pope himself.

The Future of Catholic Biblical Interpretation

Catholic teaching on Scripture of the last half century gives strong impetus to promising trends that are already evident in biblical scholarship today. The developments discussed earlier enable us to sketch some outlines of a twenty-first century renewal in biblical interpretation.

Theological Interpretation

Recent decades have witnessed an increasingly vigorous call for the recovery of genuinely theological interpretation. Theological exegesis entails not only describing the theological claims made by the biblical author but actually engaging those claims as revelatory of divine truth and studying them in the light of Christian faith and the whole of divine revelation. Exegetes have been wary of such an approach, partly in reaction to the proof-texting tendencies of the past and the sometimes facile imposition of dogmatic claims on bib-

lical studies. The wall separating exegesis and theology is in many places still airtight. But a new generation of scholars has begun to dismantle the wall and to seek more existentially relevant modes of interpretation—though sometimes using 'ideological hermeneutical models which are less compatible with Scripture's message' (Williamson 2001). The integration called for by *Verbum Domini* needs to continue and deepen. To assert the theological nature of biblical study is in no way to deny respect for its appropriate autonomy. Theological exegesis is not a method alongside other methods but rather a practice, 'a way of approaching Scripture with eyes of faith and seeking to understand it within the community of faith' (Hays 2007). Only such a practice does full justice to the Bible's character as a document of faith handed down by a community of faith, and not simply a collection of interesting writings from the past.

(p. 779) The Rehabilitation of Patristic Interpretation

Patristic biblical interpretation was rooted in the conviction that Christ is the centre of history, in whom all God's prior words and deeds are fulfilled and thus revealed in their deepest meaning. Reading Scripture in light of this Christocentric vision of history was regarded not as an optional devotional flourish but as foundational to the faith. It is still reflected in the lectionary, which often arranges Old Testament readings in typological relationship to the Gospel. Although premodern interpretation was largely discredited by modern criticism, recent years have witnessed a new interest in it, spurred in part by the renewal in patristic studies, especially Henri de Lubac's magisterial four-volume work, *Medieval Exegesis*, and in part by the postmodern rejection of the hegemony of the historical-critical approach. But is such interpretation still valid? *Verbum Domini* clearly answers in the affirmative, although it does not address the problem of how to distinguish authentic spiritual interpretation from excessive or fanciful allegorizing that is not well grounded in the text.

Biblical scholars of the coming generation will need to clarify the question of the spiritual sense, how it relates to the literal sense, and in what sense it is a theologically legitimate form of interpretation. There is also need for theological exploration of its subdivision into the allegorical, tropological, and anagogical senses, which as traditionally understood are not four different meanings but four different ways in which the mystery of Christ pervades history. It will be important to show how a proper exposition of more-than-literal senses does not bypass, eclipse, or deny the literal sense but rather accords it its full integrity. A renewed spiritual interpretation that draws on the fruits of the critical methods will be firmly based on the literal sense as understood in its full theological weight and appreciated for its own spiritual richness. Such spiritual interpretation can also be applied in an extended sense to the Gospels and other New Testament texts in their capacity to 'lead into the mystery' of Christ's divine sonship and redemptive mission (compare *CCC* 515).

The Renewal of Biblical Preaching

Verbum Domini is candid in noting the weaknesses of contemporary Catholic preaching. The gulf between exegesis and faith, it says, 'can give rise to a lack of clarity in the preparation of homilies' (*Verbum* 35). Further, there is the problem of 'generic and abstract homilies which obscure the directness of God's word' (*Verbum* 59). Defective approaches to historical criticism have contributed to a lack of confidence in the authority and reliability of Scripture among both clergy and laypeople, which weakens the effectiveness of preaching. It has long been common practice for homilists to take the lectionary readings as a springboard for a moral exhortation or devotional reflection that is only loosely related to the biblical text, rather than to explain the meaning of the text itself. But *Verbum Domini* makes clear that the function of the homily is indeed to (p. 780) explain the lectionary readings (*Verbum* 95). The document points to the need for a new approach to Scripture courses in the training of priests and pastoral ministers that will better prepare them for expository preaching and for explaining the meaning of the text as God's word addressed to his people today. The renewal of theological interpretation within a hermeneutic faith will undoubtedly lead in turn to a 'new springtime' of biblical preaching that will increase the faithful's desire to 'learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ' through frequent, prayerful study of his word (*DV* 25).

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The Second Vatican Council

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the Second Vatican Council (1959–65) and its reception. The first half of the chapter focuses on the four central 'constitutions' promulgated by the council: Lumen gentium on the nature and structure of the Church; Dei Verbum on the nature of revelation; Sacrosanctum Concilium on the liturgy; and Gaudium et spes on the Church in the modern world. The second half of the chapter considers the different ways in which the teachings of the council have been interpreted. A six-fold categorization of responses is outlined. The chapter then focuses on two of these categories, and parallels their different approaches with different strands in modern biblical interpretation.

Keywords: Vatican II, Church, liturgy, revelation, reception, continuity, discontinuity, biblical interpretation

POPE John XXIII announced a new council in 1959, the twenty-first in the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican I (1869–70) had been interrupted by the Italian army's occupation of Rome, leaving unfinished business regarding the role of the hierarchy and the nature of the Church. John XXIII called for the council to 'open the windows of the Church'; he spoke of the Church's openness to the world, he invited other Christian communities to send observers, and showed a deep concern for the Jewish people. All of this caught the imagination of many, and fuelled expectations for the council. Theological ferment had preceded the council (Kerr 2007) with neo-scholasticism engaged in a struggle with theologies of *ressourcement.* Some theologians, who had been previously silenced, were now present as *periti* (experts) at the council.

When the bishops convened in Rome for the opening session (13 October 1962), an unexpected drama occurred. The Preparatory Commissions made up mostly of theologians with deep connections to the Roman Curia (the group of officials who act as the Church's government) had over two years produced various documents for consideration by the bishops. Two cardinals, Achille Liénart and Josef Frings (whose *peritus* was the young Ratzinger), objected to the proposed composition of the Drafting Commissions. The Curia assumed they would fill the majority of positions on these commissions. The cardinals asked that the bishops be given opportunity to consult and propose their own lists. After

fifteen minutes the opening session was suspended. Frings, a year later, would publicly criticize the Holy Office, later renamed the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), and the head of the Curia, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani. Student riots in European capitals were linked with a revolutionary spirit within the Church by the world press. The new Drafting Commissions represented both the Roman Curia and European and American theological voices. The dominance of Spain and Italy had ended. Europeans bishops still represented some of the African, Asian, and Latin American churches, and some non-Europeans were less comfortable with Latin, the language of the council. (p. 783)

Table 46.1. Documents promulgated by the Second Vatican Council

Latin title	**English title**	**Date promulgated**
Sacrosanctum concilium (*SC*)	The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy	4 December 1963
Lumen gentium (*LG*)	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church	21 November 1964
Dei verbum (*DV*)	Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation	18 November 1965
Gaudium et spes (*GS*)	Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World	7 December 1965
Gravissimum educationis (*GE*)	Declaration on Christian Education	28 October 1965
Nostra aetate (*NA*)	Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions	28 October 1965
Dignitatis humanae (*DH*)	Declaration on Religious Liberty	7 December 1965
Inter mirifica (*IM*)	Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication	4 December 1963
Orientalium Ecclesiarum (*OE*)	Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches	21 November 1964
Unitatis redintegratio (*UR*)	Decree on Ecumenism	21 November 1964
Christus Dominus (*CD*)	Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church	28 October 1965
Perfectae caritatis (*PC*)	Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life	28 October 1965

Optatam totius (*OT*)	Decree on the Training of Priests	28 October 1965
Apostolicam actuositatem (*AA*)	Decree on the Apostolate of Laypeople	18 November 1965
Ad gentes divinitus (*AG*)	Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity	7 December 1965
Presbyterium ordinis (*PO*)	Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests	7 December 1965

Between 1962 and 1965, the bishops travelled to Rome a total of four times for separate sessions, involving a gruelling schedule of reading draft proposals, debates, lectures and networking, amendments, redrafting, further debate and amendments, and then voting. The discussions at the council are preserved in Latin and the *periti*, bishops and non-Catholic observers have left commentators with a forest of documentation (diaries, public lectures, interviews, and articles). All these have been used in subsequent multivolume commentaries on the council (see Alberigo 1995–2006; and the earlier five-volume theological commentary published immediately after the council, Vorgrimler 1967–1969).

The council, through the extraordinary magisterial teaching authority of the Church, promulgated sixteen documents (see Table 46.1).

(p. 784)

To interpret, integrate, and absorb these teachings will probably require the Church's reflection for the next few centuries. Inevitably, disputes occurred about the council teachings, as had happened at Nicaea (325) and Trent (1545–1563). It is impossible to outline the teachings of all sixteen documents. In this chapter I have chosen a method of exposition that will be justified in the section entitled 'Reception of the Council'. I will comment first on the four constitutions, emphasizing ways in which they provide a key to the other documents of the council.

The Four Constitutions

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

Lumen gentium is key to reading the other three constitutions and many of the other conciliar documents. Some saw in *Lumen gentium* a 'Copernican revolution' introducing many changes in Catholic thinking: a hierarchic Church was replaced by a communitarian body that fully included the laity; the pope, the bishops, and the laity, the people of God, together were teachers and shared a common priesthood. Furthermore, a community which previously saw itself as the 'only' true Church and 'necessary' for salvation was

now replaced by one that acknowledged non-Catholic Christians and non-Christians as sharing the means of salvation. Some argued that the kingdom, not the Church, was now centre stage, and the Church together with all humanity must seek the kingdom. Finally, a Church that previously had tolerated no error was now welcoming religious diversity and religious freedoms. On all these points the magisterium eventually provided clarification through the office of the pope or the CDF. Partly because of these disputes, commentary on other topics in the text of *Lumen gentium* remained underdeveloped: not least the Church as the location for the cultivation of holiness; the Trinitarian, sacramental, and Marian nature of the Church; the relation of the Church to the state; cooperation with non-Christian religions to attain justice and peace, all within the broader context of the evangelical mission of the Catholic Church to the entire world.

In the years prior to Vatican II there had been a significant debate over the nature of the Church. Pius XII's 1943 encyclical *Mystici corporis* generated passionate debate. Emphasis on the visible mystical body led Pius to argue that only Catholics could be 'members' in the full sense (*reapse*), while non-Catholics could be 'united' to the Body through desire and intention (*in voto*). *Lumen gentium* developed a complementary image of the Church as sacrament to point to the Triune founding mystery, of which the Church was a visible sign (*LG* 1, 9, 48, 59). It balanced this image with the recently recovered biblical image, the 'People of God' (*LG* 9–17). The latter expressed the Church's pilgrim nature, the freedom and responsibility of individuals, countered triumphalism, and usefully employed a recent ecumenical image. The council reflected also on Pius's distinctions, further differentiating groups within the categories (p. 785) 'non-Catholic Christians' and 'non-Christians'. Here indeed there was a development of doctrinal thinking. This was a necessary response to the new pastoral situation of radical pluralism.

Three areas in *Lumen gentium* are particularly worth noting: the pope and the college of bishops, ecumenism, and interfaith relations. In *Pastor aeternus* (1870), Vatican I had formally proclaimed the infallibility of the pope, and had intended to address the role of the bishops in their unity *with* the pope, not independently of the pope, in a subsequent constitution that was uncompleted. Vatican II provided that development with the new doctrine of 'collegiality', without detracting from the pope's independent authority (*LG* 18–29). The actual powers of the national bishops acting together were not juridically addressed, and this question was only resolved in *Apostolos Suos* in 1998. The way bishops' synods are conducted when they visit Rome has also been a matter of concern. Pope Benedict XVI introduced periods of free fraternal exchange in 2007, but there are still unresolved issues.

The faithful, while 'teaching' in the sense of their mission and witness to the truth in their lives, were not said to have any magisterial teaching authority although their assent to definitive teachings would, the council taught, 'not be lacking' (*LG* 25). This phrase comes directly from Bishop Gasser's official commentary on Vatican I's *Pastor aeternus* and does not indicate that the faithful's acceptance of a teaching is an actual criterion for authentic teaching. However, *Lumen gentium* does open up new avenues for further exploration of this question. This development of the teaching of Vatican I was a major contribution to

Catholic ecclesiology and opened new avenues of research regarding the role of bishops and the papacy.

Regarding ecumenism, the council taught that 'ecclesial elements' are visibly present in other Christian communities (in proportion to their creedal faith, ecclesiastical governance, and sacramental structure), not just as an inner union of desire. John XXIII had established the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in 1960 under Cardinal Bea. The secretariat was involved in drafting many documents for the council. In 1988 it changed to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. In *Mystici corporis* Pius had taught that the true Church of Christ is ('*est*') the Roman Catholic Church. This was not contested, but it did not allow for more differentiated expressions of relationship to other Christians and non-Christians. '*Adest in*' (is present in) was tried, but rejected since it failed to communicate that the *fullness* of Christ's body was within the Church. Sebastian Tromp, who had supported *est*, proposed '*subsistit*' (subsists in) instead, which Tromp regarded as capturing *est*, but also allowed for the recognition of 'elements' that were only fully found together and in their completeness in the Roman Catholic Church (*LG* 8, 15; see also Ratzinger 2001). Thus, rather than using 'membership' (Pius), *Lumen gentium* spoke of Catholics being fully 'incorporated' into the Church (*plene incorporantur, LG* 14), catechumens as 'united' (*coniunguntur*) by virtue of their desire (*voto*), non-Catholic Christians as 'joined' (*coniuncti*) to the Church in different ways (*LG* 15), but 'incorporated' (*incorporantur*) into Christ. Non-Christians were 'ordained' (*ordinatur, LG* 16) towards the Church. *Lumen gentium* 15 made it clear that non-Roman Catholic churches and communities 'do not profess the faith in its (p. 786) entirety or do not preserve the unity of communion under the successor of Peter'. This paragraph was vital to interpret *Unitas redintegratio* and state the telos of all ecumenical engagement: full communion under Peter.

Many questions remained unanswered, even while *Ad gentes* gave flesh and bone to these dogmatic insights. For example, the way Christian unity required Petrine unity was only formulated in subsequent documents. For instance, John Paul II's 1995 encyclical *Ut unum sint* reiterated and developed the idea that unity might be possible without communities rejecting their patrimony—as is the case with the 'Uniate' churches, the communities of historically Eastern Christians who combine adherence to Rome with their own rites and customs. *Ut unum sint* requested fraternal suggestions about the nature of the Petrine ministry. Similarly, the CDF's 2009 *Note About Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans Entering the Catholic Church* emphasized a solution that preserved 'elements of the distinctive Anglican spiritual and liturgical patrimony'. Similarly, *Unitas redintegratio* raised the question of common participation in the sacraments, rightly set between two conflicting principles: 'first, bearing witness to the unity of the Church, and second, the sharing in the means of grace' (*UR* 8). It was only later in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* and the 1993 *Ecumenical Directory* that these principles were applied in differing ways to Eastern and Reformed Western Christian communities. Common participation was more possible with the former than the latter. Many more issues remain to be clarified, but ecu-

menism was firmly placed at the centre of the Church's mission. Christian mission is inevitably compromised by the scandal of division.

Finally, key to understanding the relationship with other religions in *Nostra aetate* was *Lumen gentium* 16 (D'Costa 2014). This paragraph differentiated the unique relation between Catholics and Jews, and the very different relationships possible with theistic Muslims, and finally non-theistic religions—*Nostra aetate* would flesh this out further. Thus visible elements of belief and practice were to be valued in a differentiated manner. *Lumen gentium* 16 also made clear that salvation was possible outside the visible Church for those who have not wilfully rejected the gospel and seek, with grace, to follow their conscience. It affirmed that 'goodness and truth' found in these religious traditions are a 'preparation for the gospel'. This must be balanced with *Lumen gentium*'s teachings about the necessity of the Church (*LG* 8) and the necessity of mission: 'The duty of spreading the faith is incumbent on every disciple of Christ in so far as he or she can' (*LG* 17).

The subsequent debate regarding whether other religions are 'salvific means' was addressed by the CDF's *Dominus Iesus* (CDF 2000). The council allowed interfaith dialogue to develop in many rich and creative ways, without relativizing the truth of the Church. It allowed Catholics to be admiring and respectfully critical of and socially engaged with other religions to address questions of justice and peace. Practical initiatives have flourished since the council, overseen by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, created in 1964 during Vatican II as the Secretariat for Non-Christians, and renamed in 1998.

(p. 787) The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

Like *Lumen gentium, Dei verbum* throws profound light on the correct interpretation of many other conciliar documents. *Dei verbum* contained major developments regarding Scripture and tradition; it touched on inspiration and interpretation, and inevitably left other issues unresolved (especially the relationship of inspiration to contemporary historical studies and anthropology). I will explore two aspects: the relation of revelation to tradition, central to *Dei verbum*; and the question of Old Testament interpretation, a minor issue in *Dei verbum*.

The Council of Trent reacted against the Reformation 'Scripture alone' thesis, insisting on the authority of the Church for Scripture's proper interpretation and the actual canon of Scripture. *Dei Verbum* was concerned to develop Trent's teachings ecumenically, but also to complement the propositional understanding of revelation with a personalist appreciation. *Dei verbum* elaborated upon the concept of 'tradition' so that its vitality, resources, and authoritative power could be fully appreciated. While some have emphasized the primacy of Scripture and thus the magisterium's subservience to Scripture, this is imbalanced. In *Dei verbum* 7–10 we find a subtle and dynamic relation between revelation (Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and Father), magisterium (the apostles, of whom the episcopate are successors), Scripture, and tradition. Revelation is God's self-gift, beginning in cre-

ation, established with Israel and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In Christ, God speaks in words and deeds (*DV* 8, 14). These are witnessed to by the apostles (the magisterium) in their preaching, acts of martyrdom and mercy, dispensing of the sacraments, and in the 'institutions they established' (*DV* 7). From these men and others, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Scripture was formed—as was apostolic succession. 'Tradition' can be understood as a mode by which the divine presence continues to act within the Church drawing out the mystery of divine being and action. A beautiful image captures this dynamic, holding Scripture and tradition in tension: 'This sacred tradition, therefore, and Sacred Scripture of both the Old and New Testaments are like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face' (1 John 3:2). Scripture and tradition are to be 'accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence' (*DV* 9—citing Trent). *Dei verbum* did not address the way in which Scripture might 'reform' tradition, even if the council itself was an instance of precisely such a 'reform' in its use of Scripture to think more deeply about the issues facing the Church.

One further point with respect to tradition is important: the development of doctrine. Until the eschaton, the Church deepens its understanding of revelation, and is called to constant renewal, but always in the context of fidelity to what has been given. There is, to be sure, no new public revelation (*DV* 4), which counters any misreading of *Nostra aetate* that attributes 'revelation' to the world religions. But there is a 'growth into the realities and words that are being passed on' (*DV* 8). Mary is given as the archetype of believers 'who treasure these things in their hearts' (Luke 2:19, 51); and here spiritual (p. 788) experience, discernment, and guidance by the magisterium are stressed for 'advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth' (*DV* 9). This emphatic sense of Scripture and tradition as 'mirrors' reflecting the true and living God injected vitality into *Apostolicam actuositatem, Gravissimum educationis, Optatam totius*, and *Presbyterium ordinis* in ways that have slowly been realized. The use of Scripture for personal devotion and study by lay people and religious alike overnight brought many of the innovations of the Reformation into a Catholic context.

Interpreting the Old Testament raises interesting questions. While *Dei verbum* continued Pius XII's openness to the 'aid of history, archaeology, ethnology, and other sciences' (*Divino afflante spiritu* 35) to determine the 'literal' sense of biblical texts, it did not address the paradigm shifts between the biblical and modern world in terms of hermeneutics (e.g. the 'literal' signifying differently between the modern and premodern), except that all forms of exegesis, new and old, were to be ecclesial and Christological. Regarding the Old Testament, *Dei verbum* 14–16 insists on the continuing value of patristic and medieval Christological reading strategies. The proper meaning and final orientation of the Old Testament was discovered in its 'types', found only in Christ (*DV* 15). Two points follow from this. First, the affirmation of Judaism in *Lumen gentium* and *Nostra aetate* needs to be balanced: Israel's Scriptures were inspired in so much as they point to Christ as their fulfilment; 'before the era of salvation established by Christ' they offered 'an understanding of God and man' (*DV* 15). So while historical studies are entirely appropriate regarding the Old Testament, a theological interpretation of the of the Old Testament must

also be Christological. While the first covenant can never be revoked (a teaching later clarified by John Paul II) this does not itself mean that Judaism is exempt from mission (with every due sensitivity, see *Ad gentes*). Along these lines, in 2008 Benedict XVI revised the traditional Good Friday Prayers for the Jews used in the extraordinary form of the Mass: 'Let us also pray for the Jews: That our God and Lord may illuminate their hearts, that they acknowledge Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men'.

Second, this insistence on Christological hermeneutics goes against the grain of exclusively historically oriented exegetes. Interestingly, within the academy there has been mounting criticism of the historical-critical method as being inadequate for theological-ecclesial reading. The Protestant exegete, Brevard Childs's notion of 'canonical criticism', reading the Bible in the context of the entire canon, finds a significant parallel in *Dei verbum*, but Childs fails to offer the corrective balances in *Dei verbum*: 'canonical interpretation has not yet confronted the fullness of the patristic heritage in terms of the Rule of Faith, the context of the sacred tradition, and the magisterium' (Farkasfalvy 2007: 95).

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

Sacrosanctum concilium was the earliest of the four conciliar 'Constitutions' (1963). Prior to Vatican II there had been papal liturgical changes ever after Pius V's 1570 *Roman Missal*. Major changes were introduced by Pius XII in 1955 related to Palm Sunday, the (p. 789) Easter Triduum, and the Pentecost Vigil (Reid 2004). Pius's 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei* permitted the use of English in sacramental rites, after Roman approval, to allow the faithful to participate more fully. Some scholars urged extensive use of the vernacular not only in mission fields, but in Europe and the USA. John XXIII also made revisions to the *Missal*. Paul VI would probably have continued this process, regardless of the council.

Sacrosanctum concilium reiterated previous liturgical concerns, often citing *Mediator Dei*, and central to its approach was both an ancient and modern theme: emphasis on Christ's presence in the sacraments of the Church:

> Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister … but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings … (Matt. 18:20)'
>
> (*SC* 7).

The liturgy is unquestionably the pulsing heart of the 'Mystical Body of Christ', performed both by 'the Head and His members' (*SC* 7). While the Council of Trent had emphasized the juridical and metaphysical aspects of the sacraments, reacting to the Reformation, Vatican II developed *complementary* personalist and mystical themes. To emphasize this proper balance *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* cites Trent almost as often

as *Sacrosanctum concilium*, against the post-conciliar trend of reading *Sacrosanctum concilium* against Trent.

Sacrosanctum concilium reiterated *Mediator*'s concerns for translation and lay participation so that sacramental signs must communicate their divine realities (*SC* 37–41). No one could have imagined the widespread liturgical changes that swept through the Catholic Church after Vatican II (Whitehead 2009). *Sacrosanctum concilium* 23 can be read with retrospective wisdom: 'Finally, there must be no innovations unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them; and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing'. After the council, Paul VI's new *Roman Missal*, published in 1969, long with Vatican permission for many national liturgical changes had their own inevitable momentum. Cardinal Ratzinger lamented retrospectively 'the interdiction of the old Missal, since such a move had never been seen in the entire history of Catholic liturgy' (Ratzinger 1988: 88). The scholarly concern to retrieve the ancient as if the baroque and Romantic had been encrustations on the tradition (see eg. Cessario 2008: 133–134), is another imbalance that can be discerned retrospectively. It was inevitable that experimentation would take place and there can be no turning back on the vernacular. The question of what form might best reflect the truth of the sacramental 'sign' is still deeply contested.

Perhaps the greatest jewel in *Sacrosanctum concilium*, not fully polished and worn since, was the concern to integrate liturgy into theology. One cannot underestimate the (p. 790) paradigm shift intended by locating all study within a liturgical mode, bringing Catholic sensibilities closer to the Orthodox and to the premodern:

> professors, while striving to expound the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation from the angle proper to each of their own subjects, must nevertheless do so in a way which will clearly bring out the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, as also the unity which underlies all priestly training. This consideration is especially important for professors of dogmatic, spiritual, and pastoral theology and for those of Holy Scripture'
>
> (*SC* 16).

In biblical studies, as noted above regarding Old Testament interpretation, this shift has hardly begun, but there are important green ecumenical shoots.

The Church in the Modern World

Gaudium et spes was the last constitution of the Second Vatican Council and was subject to very diverse interpretations. Read in parts, one can see why. Read with and by the other constitutions, especially *Lumen gentium*, it is a powerful, promising, and challenging document. It brims with a love of humanity, deriving from Christ, and begins and ends by recalling Christ's service to the world, which the Church must continue. *Gaudium et spes* extols many recent modern secular achievements in human progress, while recognizing the disfigurement of sin both personally and socially (*GS* 37). *Gaudium et spes* argues that

everything good and true finds its proper orientation *only* in Christ: 'The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. … It is not surprising, then, that in Him all the aforementioned truths find their root and attain their crown' (*GS* 22). Some theologians such as Ratzinger, de Lubac, and Hans urs von Balthasar have been critical of *Gaudium et spes*'s optimism regarding human achievements, but that does not diminish *Gaudium*'s strategic concern to promote Catholic social doctrine and cooperation with all people of goodwill and to bring about just and peaceful temporal ends.

Two aspects of *Gaudium* are worth emphasizing especially for their impact on reading other documents. First, continuing the long Catholic teaching on the two orders of sacred and secular, it distinguishes the special role the laity enjoys in the civic/secular order. *Gaudium et spes* even teaches that neglect of social duties 'jeopardizes [a person's] eternal salvation' (*GS* 43). There can be no world-denying laity. But *Gaudium* also teaches that the world is passing away and the contribution Christians make to the world comes from their commitment to truth, justice, and peace that stem from Christ. *Gaudium* promotes an integrated person who needs to live out their faith in the social realm, applying principles taught by their ministers to the particular complex situations of which they are knowledgeable, in order to promote the common good. 'This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age' (*GS* 43). This language of strong condemnation is very rare in the council documents.

(p. 791) Due to the complexity of the social world, legitimate pluralism regarding application of principles may sometimes exist. For the sake of unity, Catholics should not attribute the authority of the Church to contingent and disputed applications. *Apostolicam actuositatem, Christus Dominus, Gravissimum educationis, Dignitatis humanae, Optatam totius*, and the decree *Inter mirifica* are all illuminated by *Gaudium*. *Gaudium et spes* did not foresee the depth of criticism from non-Catholics at Catholics bringing their faith into the social and political arena in Europe, but it was unambiguous regarding this prophetic duty of Christians.

Second, while *Gaudium et spes* could not be comprehensive, it chose five disputed areas to focus on to illustrate the Catholic contribution to the modern world (*GS* 46–93): marriage and the family, culture, economics, politics, and war. In treating these subjects, it showed deep levels of continuity with previous teachings, witnessed to by extensive citation of encyclicals related to marriage (*Casti connubii* 1930); and social doctrine (for example *Quadragesimo anno* 1931; *Mater et Magistra* 1961; *Pacem in terris* 1963; see also Levering 2008). It is worth stressing the utter commitment to social justice and peace, which comes to completion in Christ and his Kingdom: 'Hence, while earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ's kingdom, to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God' (*GS* 39). Later interpretations that the kingdom and social progress were identical, was clearly not taught by the council. However, Catholics must now participate in social justice and peace as part of their work for Christ's presence in the

world. Since Vatican II, the *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine* (2004) systematically consolidates, develops, and adds to these teachings, using especially the doctrine of the 'common good'. *Gaudium et spes*'s major achievement was to signal that social doctrine, a relatively recent development, would now become an established part of the Church's teachings for the future. Pope Francis would produce an encyclical on ecology and climate change in 2015, *Laudato si'*, a sign of the wider development of social doctrine.

The Reception of Vatican II

There are a number of ways in which the reception of Vatican II has been portrayed by theologians, historians, and sociologists (D'Costa 2014: 10–58). Six often overlapping narratives might be discerned, which provide snapshots of changes that have occurred in the Church. These narratives are fluid and contain serious internal diversity but they provide a useful heuristic tool.

When the bishops returned home after the Second Vatican Council those changes came, in part because bishops' conferences felt empowered (although the precise details of those powers had not been settled at the council), in part because expectations were high, and in part due to accelerated lay involvement in European and American parish life (see the work of sociologists Michael Hornby Smith for the UK, and José Casanova (p. 792) for the United States). In central and western Europe and the USA large swathes of middle-class Catholics were mobilized. Forty years later these groups, especially in central and western Europe, were leaving the Church.

Liturgical changes affected every ordinary Catholic. They were visceral as overnight the furniture, speech patterns, and sensual familiarities of the liturgy were rearranged. The vernacular replaced Latin almost entirely, the priest now faced congregations, and the laity stood on the altar and even dispensed the sacraments. Many of the changes were not actually required by the council, but the momentum within some national churches pushed them forwards. At other levels, ranging from bishops' conferences, parish councils, and structured and informal cooperation with non-Catholic Christians and non-Christians, Vatican II's documents were interpreted in local and international practices. Other Christians and non-Christians had previously been viewed with deep suspicion. Now, it seemed, things had changed. Some theologians were arguing that non-Christian religions were equal paths to the one God and some argued that other Christians equally shared in the true Church of Christ. The teaching magisterium would inevitably have to engage with the problem of the interpretation of the council, but now not only faced resistance from some theologians, but for the first time from many educated laypeople who had heralded the Second Vatican Council as a turning point. Let me focus now on the different hermeneutical narratives.

For the first narrative group, the council inaugurated fresh life into the Catholic Church, discontinuous with the Counter-Reformation of Trent and the papal power concerns of Vatican I. Let's call this the 'discontinuity' thesis. The Roman Catholic Church was to enter a new era and shake off its anti-modernism, excessive clericism with generous help-

ings of ultramontanism, scholastic rationalism and its inward-looking complacency. This was a council of discontinuity, an ‘event’ that signalled a paradigm change. This view welcomed the flourishing of local churches and inculturation, the power of regional bishops’ conferences, the socially engaged Church, the accessibility of the liturgy, the encouragement of theological education, and the pastoral rather than juridical energy of the council. This narrative saw these new roots and shoots as slowly strangled by a Curia more concerned with legalism, central control, and uniformity. Further, some significant theologians who had been among the radical elements in the council eventually began to oppose the council’s renewals. These included Ratzinger, de Lubac, Jean Daniélou, and the layperson Jacques Maritain, all involved at the council, and Balthasar and Avery Dulles, who had not been present. Names associated with the ‘discontinuity’ thesis (with internal differences) are Hans Küng, Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, and Leonardo Boff—and the journal *Concilium* formed in 1965 by these first three (and others). More recently one might add Giuseppe Alberigo, chief editor of the influential five-volume *History of Vatican II* (1995–2006) and the English-language editor of that project, Joseph A. Komonchak, and others such as Maria Teresa Fattori and Alberto Melloni.

A mirror opposite to this narrative is another, dramatically represented by Marcel Lefebvre (1997), eventually excommunicated in 1982 by John Paul II, and less dramatically represented by other prelates at the council who formed the ‘*Coetus Internationalis* *(p. 793)* *Patrum*’ (such as Cardinals Francis Spellman and Alfredo Ottaviani, and Bishops Casimiro Morcillo and Antônio de Castro Mayer). While a minority narrative, it is influential because, as vocations plummeted in Europe and North America after the council, Lefebvre’s schismatic Society of St Pius X increased its vocations. Lefebvre’s excommunication regarded the issue of his ordaining new priests, not his interpretation of the council, even though the latter led him to found his Society. Lefebvre is reported as saying to Paul VI: ‘I am ready to sign an acceptance of Vatican II as interpreted in accordance with tradition’ (Menozzi in Alberigo 1987: 344). In ‘accordance with tradition’ would be a hermeneutical theme stressed by many others, including the 1985 Synod of Bishops. Since 1982 the Vatican has made concerted efforts towards Lefebvre and the Society of St Pius X.

Let’s call this the ‘council-as-almost-heresy’ thesis. The council was radical and innovative, just as the ‘discontinuity’ group argued, but in precisely these ways it went too far. The council’s teachings on liturgy, ecumenism, other religions, and religious freedom all represent a ‘U-turn’ on the traditional teachings of earlier popes and councils. This narrative argued that the post-conciliar liturgical changes desacralized the Mass and turned it into a replica of social gatherings, rather than focusing on Christ’s sacrificial atonement and our salvation from sin. The sacerdotal nature of the priesthood was also erased through these changes. Whereas, the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church and no salvation can be found outside it, Protestants and Hindus were now being treated as salvifically equals. The Church had always taught that error could not have rights. Now *Dignitatis humanae* granted freedom and rights to error and thus to evil. Popes who supported the council could not be accepted as they had no right to preside over changes in

doctrine. Interestingly, some within ‘discontinuity’ also argue that the popes subsequent to John XXIII opposed the council (see Menzonni in Alberigo 1987: 325–349).

Third, and equally minor in number, were various ‘radical’ groups, either socialist (especially in Latin America), or feminist (especially in the United States), who saw Vatican II as the death throes of a bourgeois or/and misogynist Church that did little to really respond to the modern world. Groups such as Christians for Socialism in Latin America and theologians such as Mary Daly in the USA represent such approaches. Let’s call this the council as ‘irrelevant’ thesis. They, along with the ‘discontinuity’ thesis, mourn the suppression of the grass-roots churches committed to political liberation that flourished after the council. Many from the ‘irrelevant’ group slowly drained away from the Church.

Fourth, there is the ‘conservative’ narrative—so dubbed by the ‘liberals’. There are two versions of this narrative. One version welcomes the council but with various degrees of reservation. Since it was not a doctrinal council, it is fair to criticize some of its teachings. Central to the critique is the Trojan horse entry of modernity through the front liturgical door and then through the back doctrinal door. Tracey Rowland (2003), for example, argues that elements within the council jumped on the wrong bus to further the Church’s engagement with the world, little realizing that siding with modernity was a one-way ticket to secularism. This is why the Catholic Church began emptying (p. 794) after the council because Catholics saw little difference between the Church and social emancipatory movements within secular society (except, of course, on issues of gender and sexuality). Documents such as *Gaudium et spes* were internally inconsistent and had undertheorized ‘culture’. None of the radical liturgical reforms had been required by the council. Ratzinger is associated with this variant, although as Benedict XVI, he has focused on the positive and on continuity. Balthasar and many others related to the journal *Communio* mount such arguments. The journal was founded in 1972, in contrast to *Concilium*, by Ratzinger, Balthasar, de Lubac, Walter Kasper, Louis Bouyer, and others. Let’s call this the council as a ‘mixed-blessing’ thesis.

Fifth, version two of this same narrative defends the council’s teachings strongly, but sees confusion and disagreement arising out of misinterpretation of the council. This can be called the council as ‘continuity’ thesis. Since Vatican II is an ecumenical and authoritative council it must be assumed that doctrinally, it is in continuity with previous councils on matters of defined doctrine. All popes subsequent to John XXII belong to this group, as do theologians such as Agostino Marchetto (2010), Matthew Lamb and Matthew Levering (2008), and Dulles (2003; 2007). As argued by Pope Benedict XVI (2005), the council documents need to be placed within a hermeneutic of continuity: the texts should be read alongside previous conciliar teachings and subsequent magisterial teachings, and only thus will the renewal and reform of the Church be properly implemented. Issues have often been construed out of their organic balance within the council, where a single element is stressed out of context. For example: the council’s teachings on other religions must be understood along with teachings on revelation and Church; the interpretation of Scripture requires tradition and the magisterium; the work of ecumenism needs complementing by the Roman Catholic Church’s true Church claims and Christian unity under

Petrine unity; collegiality within the Church also requires endorsement of Vatican I's view of the papacy; emphasis on the role of the laity within the Church needs to be balanced with the sacramental, teaching, and pastoral governance of the ministerial hierarchy; emphasis on religious freedom needs to be balanced by the Roman Catholic Church's claim that it is the true Church. For the most succinct expression of this continuity argument see Dulles (2003).

Sixth, there is a sociological and theological narrative that I'll call the council as signifying 'a crisis-of-authority' thesis. This is the view that extensive press coverage of the council proceedings demonstrated to the Catholic and non-Catholic world: internal dissent between senior prelates, the Roman Curia challenged, and the possibilities of real change as experienced liturgically. As Andrew Greeley puts it, the 'immutable had mutated' (Greeley 2004: 54); and the floodgates opened. Ironically, this sense of radical change was reinforced with the publication of *Humanae vitae* (1968), the contraception encyclical, because of large-scale priestly, theological, and lay dissent. From now on, private conscience mediated the truth, not the magisterium. Greeley argued that senior clergy have never come to terms with this crisis of authority. He speculates that even had the council not happened, such a crisis was inevitable. This position is pragmatic about the future rather than being theologically driven and is found widely (p. 795) amongst theological non-specialists. In every group the figureheads have a deep love of the Church and their good intention should be assumed in any subsequent discussion.

A recurring question between the groups that take textual interpretation seriously and accept the authority of the council is: how should the Second Vatican Council documents be read? Conciliar hermeneutics is at times oddly reminiscent of the unresolved debate over biblical hermeneutics. In order to examine this question I will now concentrate on the 'discontinuity' and 'continuity' thesis as the majority of Catholics are to be found somewhere within these two groups. In proceeding thus, I do not want to suggest textual interpretation is *the* central question regarding the reception of the council. Besides textual interpretation, there are many issues to be implemented and thought through further; the council is part of a process, not the final word. Some examples here are: the role of bishops' conferences, their authority regarding doctrinal questions, the authorization of the translation of the *Missal* for the liturgy, the precise status of other religions as means to salvation, the status of various non-Catholic Christians, the model of culture. The discontinuity group complain about centralizing ways in which Rome has, in recent years, attempted to control the hermeneutics of the council texts. Papal pronouncements, such as John Paul II's 1988 *moto proprio Apostolos suos* resolved some questions about the status of national bishops' synods and the juridical powers of individual bishops. The CDF's *Dominus Iesus* (2000) addressed misunderstandings in ecumenism and interfaith relations regarding Christ and his Church. Both were heavily criticized by the discontinuity group. Whether their teachings were contrary to the council or reiterating conciliar teaching or rightly taking up unresolved questions takes us back to the basic hermeneutical question: how to read the text correctly.

The discontinuity approach is marked by two important assumptions, sometimes but not always stemming from ‘reception’ theories in the humanities (see for example Rush: 1997; Komonchak 2007: 24–51). Here I draw heavily on Alberigo’s historicist version of the discontinuity thesis. First, the documents represent historical ‘events’ that require reconstruction to best understand the ‘spirit’ of the documents, rather than slavishly following the ‘letter’, as if purely textual exegesis could be adequate to the job. Alberigo writes: ‘The interpretation of Vatican II would not be satisfactory if it were limited to an analysis of the text of the documents, with the possible additions of some excurses on the work of composing them’ (Alberigo 2006: 643). Emphasis on the ‘event’ serves to indicate that the council is generative of changes beyond any single component part of the initiating event. (In biblical studies the ‘event’ has been applied to Pauline studies by Alain Badiou). Alberigo’s own position is a version of the historical critical exegetical approach, which lays emphasis on historical reconstruction as the normative form of exegesis. In parallel he places a high normative value on the historical-critical method of biblical exegesis.

The second assumption is that the event created a rupture with the past and this must be foregrounded in interpretation. While Alberigo does acknowledge, unlike many others in the discontinuity group, that there were no real changes in doctrine, the rupture is traced in terms of a distinction between the essence and the accidentals. Alberigo is fond of citing John XXIII:

(p. 796)

> the substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. And it is the latter that must be taken into great consideration with patience if necessary, everything being measured in the forms and proportions of a magisterium that is predominantly pastoral in character (2006: 593).

New intelligible expressions are ‘freed of the more or less parasitical encrustations that had hardened in place over the centuries’ (2006: 593). Alberigo suggests that the continuity thesis, suggesting a stasis, is a ‘picture of death, not of life, of inertia, not a journey toward the heavenly homeland’ (1987: 23).

Third, implicit in the citation just given and others in Alberigo’s texts, there is a tendency to exalt early Church practices as the most reliable guide to the ‘original’ ancient doctrine and spirit—as opposed to ‘parasitical encrustations’. This move away from using tradition to interpret the texts has an analogical resemblance to the controversy over biblical interpretation. Alberigo, in a section on tradition and the council, speaks of tradition in the following way: ‘In dealing with the various subjects it faced, the Council devoted itself to developing formulations that were ever more faithful to revelation and more suited to the understanding of educated contemporaries’ (2006: 593). Here, the ‘biblical’ and ‘educated moderns’ are the two poles of meaning, curiously resembling a form of liberal Protestantism.

Fourth, the meaning of the texts is also gauged by its 'reception'. Here, there is an amalgam of the traditional theological concept of the *sensus fidei* (the sense of the faith) and forms of recent reception theory which place 'meaning', not primarily in a text, but in the reception of the text. Alberigo emphasizes that no teaching can be given authority without its reception by the 'whole Church', which must both judge and accept these teachings. He criticizes the excessive weight put on the magisterium's views, especially the CDF (Alberigo 1987: 92–93). This move mirrors the biblical exegesis debate when Ernesto Cardenal argued that the meaning of the biblical text is to be determined by the exegesis of the poor (Cardenal 1982). The non-reception of *Humanae vitae* is often cited as a good example of the teaching on artificial contraception's ambiguous status.

Turning to the 'continuity' and reform thesis I will draw on Benedict XVI (2008)—an address originally delivered in 2005. First, the council does not contain any change in doctrine. This was never intended by Pope John XXIII or the council fathers. In John XXIII's words, the council must 'transmit the doctrine, pure and integral, without any attenuation or distortion' (Benedict XVI 2008: xi). Both the 'discontinuity' and 'heretical' thesis claim the council introduced new teachings related to religious freedom, ecumenism, and other religions. But if there is no doctrinal change in what does reform consist?

Second, reform consists in the new application of enduring doctrinal 'principles' in changed circumstances. Benedict cites the controversial issue of 'religious freedom'. *Dignitatis humanae* developed teachings related to Catholics living in non-Catholic states and the duties of the state and the Catholic in such a situation. This was the major concern of the American bishops who formed the second largest bloc at the council. (p. 797) Benedict argues that if religious freedom 'were to be considered an expression of the human inability to discover the truth and thus become a canonization of relativism, then this social and historical necessity is raised inappropriately to the metaphysical level' (Benedict XVI 2008: xii). This counters both the 'heresy' and certain 'discontinuity' readings. Rather, religious freedom in *Dignitatis humanae* is perceived 'as a need that derives from human coexistence, or indeed, as an intrinsic consequence of the truth that cannot be externally imposed but that the person must adopt only through the process of conviction' (Benedict XVI 2008: xiii; Dulles 2003: 4). Benedict appropriates the badge of discontinuity: 'It is precisely in this combination of continuity and discontinuity at different levels that the very nature of true reform consists' (Benedict XVI 2008: xiii). Here one can see a similarity between discontinuity and continuity arguments.

Third, the historical circumstances of Vatican II must be understood as part of an ongoing conversation between faith and reason that takes place in whatever culture the Church is situated, and is probably misleadingly conceptualized in John XXIII's oft-cited phrase: the Church's 'openness to the world' (Benedict XVI 2008: xiv). This indicates the importance of non-textual factors in understanding documents. Benedict offers a brief overview on the complex phenomenon of modernity, noting both problematic aspects and others that should be welcomed. He is critical of certain forms of radical social liberalism and scientism that exclude God altogether. He welcomes forms of the same that do not exclude transcendence. Thus the French and Russian revolutions differed from the American, the

latter developing a secular state that was not neutral regarding values and openly drawing on its Christian heritage. Equally, he argues, the natural sciences are usually much clearer about their own limitations imposed by their own method. (Richard Dawkins is an exception, not the rule.) Hence, given the 'new' situation of modernity and its pressing questions regarding the relationship of faith to science, especially historical sciences and the Bible, the relation of the state to the Church, and the question of religious tolerance, inevitably 'some kind of discontinuity' would emerge (Benedict XVI 2008: xiii). The discontinuity could not lie in the 'principles' or doctrines, but in their application. Faith and reason work together to address this situation.

Despite important similarities, the difference between the discontinuity and continuity groups has sometimes become highly charged. For example, Cardinal Ruini presented Archbishop Marchetto's 2005 book at a press conference. Ruini, like Marchetto (later on in the presentation), compared the five-volume history of the Second Vatican Council edited by Alberigo to the famous history of the Council of Trent by Paolo Sarpi. He did not mention that Sarpi was placed on the Index of Forbidden Books immediately upon publication. Admittedly, some of the differences are intractable. I shall argue that the 'continuity' thesis can incorporate elements of the 'discontinuity' thesis with profit, and perhaps the contrast between the two groups might better be represented by other unresolved polarities: hierarchic magisterium versus egalitarian magisterium; tradition versus modernity—for these are fundamentally the real sources of conflict.

What of the principle of historical-critical normative interpretation? Alberigo's historicism is very akin to the historical-critical approach to the Bible. Benedict, speaking about the latter, formulates the problem well: 'in *a certain school*, the historical-critical (p. 798) method claimed to have the last word on the interpretation of the Bible and, demanding total exclusivity for its interpretation of Sacred Scripture, was opposed to important points in the interpretation elaborated by the faith of the Church' (Benedict XVI 2008, my emphasis). This might be applied to *certain* elements of the discontinuity school, when we find that underlying the council texts is a 'spirit' that can be recovered by historical reconstruction, and without this, interpretation is inadequate.

There are three objections to this use of the historical-critical approach, all of which occur in the biblical debate. First, the council text is part of a greater conciliar textual tradition which determines the text's meaning, so while the historical genesis of this text cannot be bypassed, our understanding cannot be limited to the historical genesis. Canonical criticism required the Bible to be read in the light of the entire canon, not just historically. Similarly, it can be argued that a proper reading of a council happens in the light of previous councils and earlier and later magisterial teachings which bear on the issue under question. This provides a multilevel historical approach, for every council not only needs to be read in company with previous and subsequent councils, but also in company with historical genetic research on those councils. This deepens, rather than abandons a historical perspective and is obviously open-ended in terms of historical research.

Second, there is also a theological element to the hermeneutic which is occluded by a rigid historicism. Readings of the Second Vatican Council, as with the Bible, cannot exclude the previous readings 'elaborated by the faith of the Church'. The faith of the Church relates to the authority given to councils in matters of faith and morals if the said council is recognized as having proper authority. The Catholic Church recognizes twenty-one councils, so the truths of those councils organically related, must determine the 'principles' which steer later readings, while also recognizing that later councils provide a continuous and unfinished commentary on previous teachings. Vatican II can be seen as both a commentary and development of Vatican I on papal and collegial power. Bogota I, a hundred years from now, might further those reflections. Hence, there is a theological assumption that must inform our reading: the Spirit keeps the Church's magisterium in the truth in matters of faith and morals. There are historians and theologians who would agree and others who would question this claim. More significantly, there is serious dispute about what precisely fits the categories of 'faith and morals'. I cannot attend to these issues further, but only indicate what is at stake in this debate.

Third, if historical critics are normative readers, then what of the teaching magisterium when they do not conform to this normative group? The 1985 Synod of Bishops provided in its final report (part I, §5) six principles for interpreting the council. They mark the hierarchic Church's own reflection on hermeneutics—although critics argue that the synods are not free, but pre-organized. The principles reflect the continuity thesis despite coming from a very mixed group (see Dulles 1987):

1. Each passage and document of the council must be interpreted in the context of all others, so that the integral teaching of the council may be rightly grasped.
(p. 799) **2.** The four constitutions of the council (on the liturgy, Church, revelation, and Church in the modern world) are the hermeneutical key to the other documents.
3. Pastoral and doctrinal elements should not to be separated or set in opposition to each other.
4. No opposition should be made between the spirit and the letter of Vatican II.
5. The council must be interpreted in continuity with the major traditions of the Church, especially earlier councils.
6. The council should be accepted as illuminating the problems of our own day.

The spirit/letter dichotomy is criticized. There is no mention of the historical reconstructive element. Reading in the context of tradition and authority is emphasized and the major constitutions are given a hermeneutical priority to guide the reading of decrees and declarations—a practice I followed earlier in this chapter in the section 'The Four Constitutions'.

It is easy to see how the historical method of the 'discontinuity' approach could be employed as a complementary approach with an emphasis on theological continuity. Indeed, I do not think that the historical approach to the texts can be simply abandoned. In the rules proposed by the synod, the historical method comes into play non-exclusively in the first and fifth principles. The theory of 'event' can also be used for there is no question

that discontinuity was part of Vatican II's agenda, including the raft of unanswered questions to which it gave rise, as well as a starting point for the Church's continuing engagement with modernity—and now postmodernity. The intellectual methods of reading texts that develop in cultural settings outside the Church (historical criticism, reception theory, and so on) might be profitably and critically used within the Church but alongside previous reading strategies rather than supplanting them. Previous strategies also need critical scrutiny. I propose that we are in part seeing a replay of the biblical hermeneutics debate in this council interpretation debate. A slow balance is being negotiated by Catholic exegetes whereby ancient and new forms of biblical exegesis might co-exist, as long as new contenders do not claim sole rights to the interpretative throne. The same is surely true of conciliar exegesis?

In siding with the 'continuity' and reform thesis, I do not want to suggest there are no problems ahead (D'Costa and Harris 2013). There are a number of issues that require further clarification and development, rather than any of its axioms being problematic. I shall isolate two. First, how is one to discern immutable principles and mutable applications, and how do such immutable principles develop and expand, and which actual applications are immutable? This entails an elaboration of the criteria for the development of dogma and requires exposition of different levels of truth related to the various teachings of the Church in differing contexts.

On the development of dogma the tradition is still very young. John Henry Newman (1801–1890) is its earliest classic exponent, although the idea is already present in Augustine. Since Newman's work, a host of theologians have reflected on this question, perhaps most importantly in the pre-conciliar works of Rahner, Schillebeeckx, and Yves Congar (Nichols 1990). To summarize their conclusions: truth is given in (p. 800) revelation, but the unfolding of our penetration into that truth takes time and discernment, and requires authority. The three ways in which these truths unfold and develop are through: (a) the historical memory of the Church; (b) theological logic reflecting on what is already given, discovering what is implicit in *de fide*, and; (c) the devotion within the Church that the ancient principle *lex orandi lex credendi* expresses the principle that the law of prayer is the law of belief; this last point was particularly significant for developments of Marian dogma. All three areas require careful discernment and magisterial judgement and a climate where healthy pluralism and creativity can flourish in practices and thought. Rahner and Schillebeeckx's later works lose their confidence in the magisterial sifting process because of theological pluralism (Rahner), and hermeneutical pluralism (Schillebeeckx). Interestingly, Balthasar and Ratzinger promote pluralisms of both sorts, but argue for harmonics rather than cacophony. Herein lies an important avenue for further research.

On discerning what can and cannot change in the expression of true doctrinal principles, the question of the development of doctrine becomes central. In this respect, there are good reasons to return to the tradition of 'theological notes' (Ernst 2002). These 'theological notes', graded levels of truths, were provided so that one knew what was of the faith, denial of which was heretical (*de fide*—which had various subdivisions within this category). At the other end of the spectrum were opinions of variable status: probably, more

probable, well-founded (*sententia probabilis, probabilior, bene fundata*). When applied to a principle's application (exclusion of women to the ministerial priesthood, usury, the war in Iraq, not offering the sacrament of communion to those who had been divorced and remarried, and the ban on all artificial contraception) the best judgments may be varyingly found within lay or ministerial communities or both. These 'notes' are attached to a number of council documents but are no longer widely referenced or understood (Morrisey 1990). Since Aristotle, the art of prudential judgement has been central to the practice of the virtues. Nevertheless, since some of these examples have already been proclaimed irreformable and been the source of much division, such categorizing may be seen as divisive, although truth and unity need to be balanced.

The second question I raise regards 'reception' by the faithful. I have noted the key role this plays for the 'discontinuity' school. Conversely there is an absence of this criterion in the 'continuity' school. The latter might respond as follows. First, the teaching about the laity at the council did not deem their reception of Church teachings as the authority by which those teachings could be deemed true. *Lumen gentium* 12 and *Dei verbum* 8 and 10, so often cited in this discussion, should be understood as the *Catechism* puts it: 'the People of God, under the guidance of the Church's living Magisterium, "unfailingly adheres to this faith" ' (*CCC* 890). Second, laypeople and sometimes priests are more profoundly shaped by the culture of modernity than the culture of Catholicism. In this sense, the emphasis on the laity under the 'guidance' of the magisterium becomes crucial, just as conscience must also be understood not as a right to think what one wishes, but rather is a formation of an informed and faithful mind which must never be coerced. Third, while the laity faithful play a key part in teaching (here, the *Catechism* draws heavily on canon law, not the council, to establish (p. 801) this), their teaching authority is of a different order from the magisterium. This latter was never contested at the council.

If we relate this final point to biblical hermeneutics, it bears some parallel to Cardenal (and others) who entrusted gospel interpretation to the popular Church. This important impulse was partly inspired by *Dei verbum*'s emphasis on lay engagement with the Scripture (*DV* 22), and was deeply interested in recovering themes from the reformers that had become drowned out in the Counter-Reformation. But we return to the question of authority. While lay interpretation of Scripture is vital to the spiritual life, there must be a question about whether any and all interpretations of the 'people of God' are acceptable, just as one might pose this question to priests in their individual preaching.

It is very early days to view the full fruits of Vatican II, but fruits there are, rich and ripe, and the authority of the council cannot be challenged given its status. So Vatican II's reception will continue—and be contested.

Suggested Reading

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Theologies of Liberation

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Abstract and Keywords

The term ‘theologies of liberation’ refers to a global theological movement that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s among Christians working for justice among the poor of the Third World. Most systematically articulated, initially, by Latin American theologians such as the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez, liberation theology is rooted in the Gospel claim that Jesus Christ is identified in a special way with the poor and marginalized of our world. Early influences on the emergence of liberation theology in Latin America included: the Catholic Action movement, base ecclesial communities, Vatican II (especially Gaudium et spes), and the Medellín Conference of 1968. The central insight of liberation theologies is that, because God makes a ‘preferential option for the poor’, we are called to do so as well; if Christ is identified with the marginalized, the lives of the poor is the privileged locus for practising Christian theological reflection.

Keywords: liberation, freedom, poor, Medellín, Puebla, Latin American, popular religion, Gutiérrez

DURING the 1960s a number of theological movements emerged from the engagement of Christians in struggles for social change, particularly among Third World peoples. While the social and ecclesial contexts of these movements often differed, what they shared was a desire to read and interpret the Scriptures and faith from the perspective of the marginalized or oppressed peoples of our world. In other words, as the Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez noted, liberation theology represents not so much a new theology as a ‘*new way* to do theology’ (Gutiérrez 1988: 12). He aptly described this way, or method as a ‘critical reflection on Christian praxis in light of the word of God’ (Gutiérrez 1988: xxix). By Christian praxis, Gutiérrez means the Christian’s lived faith, which includes two mutually implicit dimensions, neither of which can exist without the other: a contemplative dimension (worship, spirituality) and a practical dimension (charity, justice). Thus, theological reflection will be grounded in a faith that is lived alongside and in service to the poor. In this process of accompanying the poor one will encounter the God of the poor, a God who is present in a special way among the outcast.

When read through the eyes of the poor, avers Gutiérrez, the Scriptures reveal two overarching themes: 1) the universality and gratuity of God's love, and 2) God's preferential love for the poor (Gutiérrez 1988: xxvi). At first blush these themes appear to be mutually contradictory. However, when the Scriptures are read through the eyes of the poor, the universality and gratuity of God's love can be seen to *presuppose* God's preferential (not exclusive) love for the poor. As the victims of injustice, the outcasts of history can recognize the divided, conflictive condition of our world with an acuity not available to those who benefit from that division; the one who suffers from injustice is more likely to recognize the existence of injustice than is the one who lives in comfort. If our world is divided between the powerful and the powerless, and if God's universal love is to be made manifest in the midst of a world thus divided, that love *must* take the side of the powerless—precisely *because* God loves the powerful and powerless equally. If a father who loves equally his young daughter and much older, stronger son enters a room in which his two children are fighting, the father will (must) take the side of the smaller daughter by demanding that the stronger child 'liberate' the smaller child. In (p. 804) such a situation of division and unequal conflict, the father's 'universal' love cannot be neutral; should the father remain neutral, his silence and inaction would imply consent to the unjust status quo. The father's love for his daughter will manifest itself as liberation; the father's love for his son will manifest itself as confrontation, as a call to conversion. That God's love is universal is not to say that it is neutral; indeed, it is to say the very opposite. Moreover, because God's love is gratuitous, freely given, and unmerited, it will be revealed in a special way among those people whom society deems to be least worthy of God's love; as the beloved of God, they are the privileged witnesses to a love which is unconditional, unmerited, and whose extravagance exceeds all our expectations. The God who 'does not belong' will be encountered in a special way among those persons who do not belong. Only if we can recognize these 'little ones' as beloved of God will we be able to truly recognize God's love as universal.

The Early Years in Latin America

Each theology of liberation implements this methodology within the context of a particular marginalized community, for example, African-American, African, Asian, Native American, US Latino/a. However, the most systematic articulation of a liberation theology has been undertaken by Latin American theologians. Moreover, as home to roughly half of the world's Roman Catholics, Latin America plays a particularly crucial role in the pastoral and theological life of the Catholic Church. It is no coincidence, then, that the theology of liberation emerging from Latin America has had a major impact on Catholic theology during the last five decades. The seeds of a Latin American liberation theology were sown in the 1950s, when a generation of European-educated Latin American Catholic priests returned to their native countries and began working among the Latin American poor. Having finished their theological studies in Germany, France, or Italy, they now sought to bring those studies to bear on their pastoral work among the Latin American poor. Among others, these young theologians included: Gustavo Gutiérrez in Peru, Diego Irarrazaval and Sergio Torres in Chile, Clodovis and Leonardo Boff in Brazil, Juan Luis Segundo in

Uruguay, Jon Sobrino in El Salvador, and Juan Carlos Scannone and Enrique Dussel in Argentina. (Dussel was one of the few laypersons in this original group.) Often, these theologians worked as chaplains in the *Acción Católica* (Catholic Action), a network of Catholic university students seeking to bring their faith into the streets, to bridge the divide between the world of the academy and the world of the poor. In this work, *Acción Católica* put into practice the 'see-judge-act' methodology inherited from the Belgian Young Catholic Worker movement: 'see' the reality of your circumstances, 'judge' this reality in the light of the Scriptures and Christian faith, and 'act' in accordance with that judgement.

As they sought to understand and respond to the Latin American reality, these theologians and pastors soon realized that the theology they had learned at Frankfurt or Lyon was not adequate to the reality they were encountering in the streets of Santiago or Lima. (p. 805) They thus began to reflect theologically on their experience working among the Latin American poor, asking themselves where and how God was being made present in that reality or, as Gutiérrez put it many years later, how one can speak of God (do theology) in the midst of innocent suffering (Gutiérrez 1987). As opposed to their European counterparts, who often implemented philosophical tools in their theological investigations, the Latin American theologians would look primarily to the social sciences for the intellectual instruments to analyse and address effectively their social context. A number were influenced by the social analyses of Karl Marx, particularly his insights into the relationship between knowledge and its socio-economic context, i.e., that ideas (including theology) reflect and legitimate the economic interests of the economic class from which they are born. At the same time, the Latin American theologians were, ironically, attempting to prove Marx wrong; if the German thinker had asserted that religious faith is inherently oppressive (or more specifically, in the later Marx, inherently a legitimating reflection of oppressive economic structures), Latin American theologians were arguing that, though a *distorted* interpretation of Christian faith may at times *function* to legitimate oppression, the Christian faith is itself liberating and, indeed, demands prophetic action.

In addition to *Acción Católica*, another crucial influence in the development of liberation theology was the grassroots *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base*, or Base Ecclesial Communities (CEBs). These were small groups of rural peasants or urban poor who gathered regularly to read the Bible and pray together. Like the see-judge-act method of *Acción Católica*, the method of reading Scripture was inherently contextual and practical. That is, Scripture reading and prayer were intentionally and consciously grounded in the lived reality of the community: how particular Gospel texts relate to the community's experience; what the practical implications of those texts might be; how the everyday reality of the community and society might be evaluated and judged in the light of the Scriptures; how the Bible challenges the community to make present God's will more fully in their lives and society. Consequently, many CEBs became active socially and politically, though the degree of social activism varied greatly across the continent. This activism often focused on local community organizing to push for access to education, health care, potable water, or sewage facilities. In other instances, CEBs might become more directly involved

in political movements for social change at the national level, such as efforts to unionize labour or reform land ownership.

These grassroots efforts drew additional support from the pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council. Of particular import was the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (*Gaudium et spes*), with its call for the Church to immerse itself in the everyday struggles of people throughout the world:

> [T]he Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its (p. 806) explanations, its longings, and its often dramatic characteristics. Some of the main features of the modern world can be sketched as follows.
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> (*GS* 4)

The challenge to scrutinize the signs of the times and evaluate them in the light of the Gospel affirmed the see-judge-act methodology and was taken up by local churches throughout the Catholic world.

The Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) itself responded to the council's challenge by convoking a general conference of Latin American bishops in Medellín, Colombia in 1968. The Medellín Conference proved to be a groundbreaking event in the history of the Latin American Church. Accompanied by their theological experts, many of whom had been involved in Catholic Action and the Base Ecclesial Communities, the bishops sought to apply the see-judge-act methodology to the contemporary reality of Latin America. They thus began by observing that the most salient 'sign of the times' in Latin America was the extreme poverty and deprivation that characterized the everyday lives of the vast majority of their people. The bishops noted that the Latin American poor were victims of social structures whose dehumanizing and destructive effects amounted to a form of chronic violence under which millions of people were forced to live. Reading this historical situation in the light of the Gospel, the bishops denounced the inhuman conditions in the strongest possible terms, asserting that such injustice was in direct contravention of God's will. In so doing, the bishops rejected any interpretation of the suffering of the poor as somehow providential or fated and, thus, to be borne with resignation. Finally, the Medellín Conference concluded that, in such a historical context, Christ calls the Church to be a 'Church of the Poor' (as distinguished from a Church *for* the Poor, or even a Church *with* the Poor). While at Medellín, the Latin American bishops therefore proposed what would later come to be known as a 'preferential option for the poor', the term itself would not appear in CELAM documents until 1979, at the next general conference of CELAM in Puebla, Mexico.

Throughout the continent, activist Christians interpreted the Medellín Conference as providing official support for Christian involvement in movements for social change, at times even including revolutionary movements. This latter, particularly, became a cause of concern for numerous Catholic bishops, who complained that their words at Medellín had been misinterpreted in order to justify Christian participation in political revolution. The debate that emerged around the correct interpretation of the Medellín Documents, and the proper relationship between faith and politics, engulfed the Latin American Church during the decade after Medellín. Consequently, when CELAM decided to convoke another general conference in 1979, many Latin American Catholics were concerned that the new ecclesial direction set in 1968 would be reversed, while others were hoping it would be reversed. Moreover, the Puebla Conference would be led by the Colombian Archbishop (later Cardinal) Alfonso López Trujillo, an outspoken opponent of liberation theology who had been elected the General Secretary of CELAM in 1972. Post-Medellín concerns about some interpretations of those documents were also reflected in the fact that the theological experts who had been so influential at Medellín (p. 807) would be excluded from Puebla (though some would still be able to exert an informal influence).

It was in this contentious environment that, in 1979, the recently elected Pope John Paul II travelled to Mexico to open the Third General Conference of CELAM in Puebla. In words that would set the tone for later Vatican pronouncements on liberation theology, John Paul II strongly condemned the oppressive conditions under which the Latin American poor were living; he called for Catholics, guided by the principles of Catholic social teaching, to become engaged in the struggle for justice; and warned against interpretation of that struggle through a lens of Marxist revolution that identified Christ with revolutionary movements. By the time the conference had ended, its final documents had essentially confirmed the Church's preferential option for the poor as enunciated implicitly at Medellín and made that commitment an explicit principle of Catholic social teaching. Moreover, in much greater detail than they had done eleven years earlier, the bishops at Puebla enumerated and detailed those groups who comprise 'the poor', calling special attention to the 'double-oppression' suffered by, for example, poor women, youth, and indigenous peoples.

A Theology of Liberation

Among the early 'fathers' of Latin American liberation theology were such figures as the Argentine lay theologian Enrique Dussel, the Uruguayan Jesuit Juan Luis Segundo, the Brazilians Hugo Assmann and the Boff brothers (Leonardo and Clodovis), and Jon Sobrino, a Basque Jesuit who had worked many years in El Salvador. However, the first Catholic theologian systematically to articulate a liberation theology was Gustavo Gutiérrez. It was he who, it is commonly held, first used the term 'theology of liberation' in a 1968 public lecture. More importantly, in 1971 he published the book *Teología de la Liberación: Perspectivas*, which appeared in English two years later under the title *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. While each liberation theologian's work exhibited particular concerns and emphases, often reflecting their distinctive historical

contexts, all shared a similar understanding of theology as a ‘critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the word of God’.

In this so-called ‘Magna Carta’ of liberation theology, Gutiérrez lays out his ‘new way to do theology’. Central to this methodology, he notes, is a new way of understanding the relationship between Christian salvation and history; that relation must be understood as non-dualistic and integral. Gutiérrez outlines the principal paradigms or models that, over the centuries, have informed Christian theology’s views of the relationship between faith and history. The Christendom model subsumed history within salvation history; Church and state served a common end. This model came under direct attack during and after the Enlightenment, with the consequent separation of Church and state. The Christian faith would continue to exert influence in the political order, but would henceforth be able to do so only indirectly, not through official institutional or ecclesial (p. 808) channels but through the efforts of individual lay Christians. Having been formed in the faith through their participation in the Church’s sacramental life, Christian men and women would infuse secular society with Christian values. They would do so, not as official representatives of the Church, but in their everyday work as lawyers, doctors, teachers, workers, etc. They would thus be influencing society not *qua* Christians but *qua* lawyers, doctors, etc., thereby preserving the distinction between the spiritual and the secular. As official representatives of the Church, on the other hand, priests would be precluded from exercising direct influence on society. As Gutiérrez explains, the spiritual and secular planes—or salvation history and human history—would not be separated, but they would be distinguished within what he calls the New Christendom and the distinction of planes models.

Gutiérrez goes on to argue that, during the 1960s and 1970s in Latin America, these models underwent a crisis; the experience of Latin American Christians forces them to re-examine this distinction of planes. Christians opting for the poor discover that the explicit political neutrality demanded of the Church in the distinction of planes model has served as implicit support for unjust social structures; the Church’s silence on political and economic issues inevitably functions as implicit consent. As the Church makes a preferential option for the poor, it discovers that, despite its nominal political neutrality, its silence on issues of injustice in Latin America has for centuries served the interests of the economic and political elites. In other words, neutrality is not possible; the only alternative to an (explicit) option for the poor is an (implicit) option for the rich. The experience of the Latin American Church, argues Gutiérrez, calls for a new model for understanding the relationship of salvation and history which understands God’s salvific activity as integral to history itself. Salvation history is not distinct from human history, but is the deepest meaning and fulfilment of that history itself.

In turn, the experience of Latin American Christians and the attendant challenge to claims of political neutrality have important ramifications for Christian theology. If the spiritual is always lived out in and within the secular, and if the Church’s claim to political neutrality is therefore illusory, then so too are any claims to political neutrality on the part of Christian theology and theologians. A Christian’s salvation is always necessarily worked out and realized within the warp and weft of one history. Thus, ‘spiritual’ salva-

tion and ‘political’ liberation are inextricably linked. Indeed, according to Gutiérrez, liberation always involves three integrally related dimensions: 1) the socio-economic, involving liberation from all forms of material and social oppression; 2) the personal, involving an interior transformation wherein the poor person ceases to be a passive object of someone else and, instead, becomes a true subject, an agent of his or her future; and 3) the spiritual, involving liberation from sin, the deepest, foundational root of all forms of oppression. Gutiérrez makes it clear that, while human persons are called to participate actively in the first two dimensions of liberation, only God, through the person of Jesus Christ, can liberate us from sin; salvation is pure gift. Yet, because that gift can only be received in and through our concrete historical actions, our receptivity to God’s offer of salvation takes the form of our active commitment to the first two (p. 809) dimensions of liberation. Likewise, sin is never encountered in a purely spiritual form but always in its concrete, historical mediations: for example, broken human relationships, violence, exploitation, oppression (Gutiérrez 1988: xxxviii, 24–25).

If Christian theology can claim to be a reflection on the Christian God, then, theology must itself be rooted in an active commitment to and participation in God’s salvific/liberating activity in history. That is, as mentioned earlier, theology will be a ‘critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the word of God’. Because God can only be encountered in history and, especially (though not exclusively), in the everyday struggles of the poor, only a theology in solidarity with those struggles can claim to speak about that God. At the same time, that praxis of solidarity must be evaluated critically ‘in the light of the word of God’, in the light of the Scriptures.

This ‘hermeneutical circle’, or circle of interpretation, impacts not only our praxis—as it is evaluated in the light of Scripture—but also our interpretation of Scripture. When read in the context of a solidarity with the poor, the Scriptures reveal a God who does not separate salvation and liberation but whose commitment to the liberation of the poor is an element intrinsic to God’s salvific will, a God for whom liberation from oppression is an element intrinsic to salvation from sin. The paradigmatic example of this integral salvation is the figure of the Crucified and Risen Christ himself. As the place where God’s reconciliation with humanity takes place, the cross is simultaneously the very practical consequence of Christ’s solidarity with the outcasts of his time; the symbol of our salvation from sin is also the consequence of Christ’s preferential option for the poor—or, perhaps more accurately, the former is a consequence of the latter. The resurrection is not only the victory of life over death (or sin) but it is also, and inextricably, the victory of justice over injustice; it is God’s vindication of the One whose crucifixion is the inevitable consequence of his solidarity with all those who themselves continue to be ‘crucified’ in history. Certain biblical texts thus begin to take on greater significance. The Exodus story, for instance, is interpreted as underscoring the holistic, historical character of God’s liberating activity in history. Likewise, Gutiérrez and other liberation theologians see the parable of the Last Judgement in Matthew 25 as subverting any attempt to separate salvation from liberation: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry… ?’ To love the poor *is* to love Christ himself.

Vatican Reaction

Though Gutiérrez and other major liberation theologians were careful to avoid reducing theology to mere social activism, the danger of such reductionism attended the movement from the beginning. If the traditional risk had been that of reducing the Christian faith to an exclusively spiritual, interior reality, the risk in liberation theology was that of reducing faith to the political struggle for justice. In the first decades of the liberation theology movement, both critics and sympathizers of the movement would succumb to such reductionist interpretations—interpretations that often served (p. 810) the particular interests of the critics or sympathizers. On the one hand, reactionary interests in Latin America sought to portray liberation theology as simply 'baptizing' of Marxist revolution, a view that Gutiérrez and other liberation theologians explicitly rejected. Throughout Latin America and, indeed, North America, opponents of social change identified liberation theology with Marxist revolution. Ironically (and cynically), Marxist revolutionaries themselves promoted this identification of Jesus Christ with Karl Marx since such an identification would clearly serve the legitimacy of their cause. Given this confluence of interests between supporters and opponents of liberation theology, very few of whom had actually *read* liberation theology, it would come as no surprise that images and posters of Jesus Christ carrying an AK–47 machine gun would proliferate and become the 'face' of liberation theology in the Americas.

Even less surprising, in this highly politicized context, would be the reaction of the Vatican. Only five years after Puebla, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, headed by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, issued an 'Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation" ' (CDF 1984). While unequivocally denouncing the oppressive condition under which most Latin Americans were forced to live, the 1984 document also warned of dangerous tendencies in 'some' theologies of liberation. On the one hand, the Instruction notes that the notion of freedom is central to the Christian kerygma and thus calls for the development of an authentic theology of liberation. Consequently, Cardinal Ratzinger warns against any attempt to use the Instruction's critique as an excuse for avoiding the Christian responsibility to work for justice and to articulate a properly Christian understanding of freedom. He also notes that, while this Instruction sets forth the CDF's critical concerns, a second Instruction will follow, which will more affirmatively present the case for an authentically Christian theology of liberation.

The first chapter of the 1984 Instruction proceeds to affirm the value of humankind's aspiration for freedom while, at the same time, denouncing 'the scandal of the shocking inequality between the rich and poor' (CDF 1984: I. 6). In dramatic, unambiguous terms, Ratzinger calls this inequality intolerable. Subsequent sections examine the theological, biblical, and doctrinal roots of freedom and liberation. Noting that, therefore, the 'theology of liberation' has deep roots in Christian history, Ratzinger argues that potential dangers lie, not in the use of the term itself, but in the interpretation given to the term: What does one mean by 'liberation'?

Central to Ratzinger's argument is the assertion that all liberation comes, first and foremost, from God through Jesus Christ. All other forms of liberation, therefore, are secondary by-products of this fundamental form of liberation. Likewise, the fundamental form of enslavement is our enslavement to sin; all other forms of human slavery, alienation, or injustice have their roots in the human person's alienation from God. The Instruction warns against any understanding of liberation that reverses, or inverts these causal relationships.

The next section of the document examines the dangers inherent in the use of Marxist analysis. The central charge here is that such analysis is reductionistic, reducing liberation to economic liberation, which is, in turn, reduced to an antagonistic class struggle (p. 811) antithetical to the universal message of Christian liberation. Moreover, argues Ratzinger, this reductionism is intrinsic not only to Marxist analysis but to the Marxist ideology per se, which is itself atheist; one cannot simply extract elements of Marx's analysis of society without simultaneously appropriating, even if unwittingly, Marx's materialistic, atheist world view. To introduce Marxist analysis into Christian theology is to introduce that materialistic ideology and undermine the transcendent character of the Christian understanding of liberation.

Moreover, argues Ratzinger, Marx conflates the poor and the proletariat, reducing the former to the latter, which is defined by the class struggle. Consequently, insofar as theologians promote a 'Church of the Poor' (or 'Church of the People') and read this phrase through the lens of Marxist analysis, the 'Church of the Poor' will be perceived as inherently in opposition to the '*sacramental* and *hierarchical structure* of the Church' (CDF 1984: IX. 13). Much as Marx opposes proletariat and capitalists, theologians would then oppose the Church 'of the Poor' and *the* Church. Such a false opposition would construe the Church of the Poor as a parallel Church, alongside and in opposition to the sacramental and hierarchical Church.

This dichotomy is accompanied by and leads to a dichotomy between orthodoxy (correct belief) and orthopraxis (correct action); revolutionary praxis then becomes the criterion of orthodoxy—and 'the poor' (i.e., proletariat) replace the hierarchy as the arbiters of Christian truth. Christ's own life is reduced to that of a political revolutionary whose death is but the consequence of his politics. Likewise, the radical character of redemption from sin is reduced to a purely temporal liberation.

This first Instruction concludes as it began, with an affirmation of the centrality of authentic liberation to the Christian kerygma and a warning against any attempt to use the criticisms articulated in this document as an excuse to avoid the crucial work of social justice, or to minimize the horrific character of injustice in Latin America and throughout the globe. These criticisms, notes Ratzinger, are not levelled against liberation theology per se, or against any particular theologian(s) but against 'the serious deviations of some "theologies of liberation" ' (CDF 1984: XI. 1).

As promised, the first Instruction on liberation theology was followed two years later, in 1986, by a second document, entitled ‘Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation’. Here Cardinal Ratzinger develops more fully and systematically his argument for an authentic theology of liberation rooted in Scripture and tradition. The cornerstone of his argument is that all genuine liberation is rooted in and derives from Jesus Christ, who is ‘the way, and the truth, and the life’ (CDF 1986: Intro., 3). This fundamental truth is the ground and criterion of all genuine freedom. Authentic liberation is thus impossible outside communion with Jesus Christ, who calls us into that communion thereby revealing to us the freedom inherent in our nature as children of God.

This central truth, argues Ratzinger, is obscured by modern notions of freedom that locate the roots of liberation not in Christ but in the autonomous human individual. While modern liberation movements have good intentions, these are ultimately undermined by a distorted understanding of the nature of the human person and, therefore, the nature of human freedom. Isolated from their intrinsic relationship to God, and thus (p. 812) to other persons and to nature, modern individuals conceive freedom as the ability to exercise power or mastery over self, over others, and over nature (CDF 1986: I, 1). This drive for mastery in turn leads to new forms of oppression, made possible by the development of new, more efficient technological instruments for the exercise of power. Rather than the ground of all freedom, relationship with God is denounced as the greatest obstacle to freedom.

In the second part of the Instruction’s first chapter, Ratzinger addresses a major concern of modern liberation movements, namely, the poor. Here again, he argues that modern notions of freedom ultimately result not in the liberation of the poor but in new, more destructive forms of oppression and servitude. Yet, if we look to the poor themselves, we discover a very different understanding of liberation, one rooted in a living relationship with God: ‘They know that they are loved by God, the same as all other people and more than all other people. They thus live in the freedom that flows from truth and love’ (CDF 1986: I. 21). As expressed especially in their ‘popular piety’, ‘it is the poor, the object of God’s special love, who understand best and as it were instinctively that the most radical liberation, which is liberation from sin and death, is the liberation accomplished by the death and resurrection of Christ’ (CDF 1986: I. 22).

In the second chapter, Ratzinger sets forth the theological anthropology implicit in the Christian understanding of freedom. Because true freedom is experienced only in communion with God, as God’s gift of redemption revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, ‘freedom is not the liberty to do anything whatsoever… It is the freedom to do good, and in this alone happiness is to be found’ (CDF 1986: II. 26). Freedom must be based on a true understanding of the self as created by God, in the image and likeness of God. Social, political, economic, and other forms of ‘temporal liberation’ are but ‘the conditions needed for the exercise of an authentic human freedom’ (CDF 1986: II. 31).

In Chapter 3, the Instruction analyses the Scriptural understanding of liberation. In both the Old and New Testaments, observes Ratzinger, liberation is grounded in God’s own lib-

erating activity in history; human beings participate in God's own liberating action to the extent that they live in communion with God. Liberation, then, is ultimately dependent on the God 'who loved us first': 'Christian love, which seeks no reward and includes everyone, receives its nature from the love of Christ who gave His life for us' (CDF 1986: III. 56). Though temporal liberation is grounded in God's own loving action, these are integrally related dimensions of liberation. The distinction between human and divine liberation is not—and must not be allowed to devolve into—a separation (CDF 1986: III. 60).

The Instruction ends with an analysis of the Church's role in the liberation process, a role articulated and developed most explicitly in the Church's social teaching. While 'the Church's essential mission, following that of Christ, is a mission of evangelization and salvation', that mission 'extends to the whole moral order, and notably to the justice which must regulate human relations. This is part of the preaching of the Gospel' (CDF 1986: IV. 63). Again, the distinction must not become a separation: evangelization includes a commitment to justice, and salvation includes liberation—even if the first in each pair is always foundational.

(p. 813) Central to the Church's integral mission is a 'love of preference for the poor' that mirrors Jesus' own special love for the poor. This preferential love for the poor, 'far from being a sign of particularism or sectarianism, manifests the universality of the Church's being and mission' (CDF 1986: IV. 68). The 'new basic communities' that seek to embody this love for the poor 'are a source of great hope for the Church', but only 'if they really live in unity with the local Church and the universal Church' (CDF 1986: IV. 69).

These principles are all explained and developed in the Church's social teaching. In the last section of the Instruction, Ratzinger thus outlines the central themes of Catholic social teaching: solidarity, subsidiarity, violence as a last resort, the responsibility of the laity in the political order, the intrinsic value and priority of labour over capital, and the numerous rights intrinsic to the human person. The Conclusion is a short reflection on the Magnificat, returning to the theme of popular piety as an expression of the *sensus fidei*, wherein the poor encounter a God who has 'brought down the mighty from their thrones' and 'fed the hungry with good things'.

Liberation Theology Beyond the Instructions

During the 1980s and 1990s Latin American liberation theology underwent an important period of transition. The Instructions themselves prompted dialogue between Rome and Latin American theologians, in some cases direct confrontation (for example, the Vatican's year-long 'silencing' of Leonardo Boff in 1985 and again in 1992) and, in numerous cases, self-reflection on the part of liberation theologians. Most liberation theologians explained that the Vatican's concerns and warnings were indeed legitimate, and they agreed with the warnings, but the theologians went on to assert that these warnings did not apply to their own theological writings. Typical was the reaction of the Chilean Pablo Richard, who observed:

> We [liberation theologians] welcome this instruction on the Theology of Liberation with a sense of hope, since it is not a condemnation but rather a positive discernment among the different strands of this theological movement… Out of obedience of faith, love for the church and intellectual honesty, I publicly declare that I embrace the Sacred Congregation's declarations and warnings in all their major points.
>
> (Richard 1984).

Gustavo Gutiérrez's most systematic response to the concerns of critics was set forth in 1988, in the 'Second Introduction' to the revised edition of his *A Theology of Liberation*. There he welcomed the dialogue as an opportunity to clarify his own ideas while, at the same time, noting that his theology had been rooted in the Gospel, in Christ, and in spirituality from the beginning. Clarifying why his theology was not reductionist, he also acknowledged that a theologian bears some responsibility for ambiguities that may lead (p. 814) to distorted interpretations of his or her writings; a theologian cannot be absolved of all responsibility simply by claiming that he or she has been misinterpreted. It is no coincidence then that, for instance, the term 'class struggle', which appeared in the book's first edition was here replaced by the term 'social conflict' (this latter unencumbered by the Marxist genealogy and connotations of the former).

Beyond the Instructions, however, a number of global events during the 1980s and 1990s would have a lasting impact on the development of liberation theology. The 1980s witnessed the death throes of socialist states throughout the world. In Europe, the Berlin Wall fell on 9 November 1989. In Latin America, the victory of the Sandinista revolution was followed by disillusionment as the Sandinista government—albeit at least partially in reaction to US-supported counterrevolutionaries—increasingly concentrated power and marginalized the opposition, eventually being voted out of office in 1990. Prior to and especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc, Fidel Castro increased his grip on the Cuban people, effectively laying waste to the hopes of social reform that had given birth to the 1959 Cuban Revolution. If most liberation theologians had pinned their hopes for reform on the emergence of some form of socialist society (broadly speaking), by 1990 it was clear that such a society was, at best, still in the very distant future.

With the demise of hopes for economic reform and the so-called 'victory' of capitalism, a second generation of liberation theologians began to pay increased attention to aspects of liberation theology which, though present from the beginning, were gaining greater significance in the contemporary context. One of these was spirituality. As hopes for social change were dashed, the question emerged: How do the poor survive day to day in a context where large-scale social change is not possible? The new attention to the everyday experience of the poor as a locus of resistance and empowerment in turn brought to the fore, methodologically, new dimension of that 'praxis' on which theology sought to reflect; praxis includes not only the explicit struggle for social change but also the everyday *cultural* and *religious* practices which provide the spiritual, emotional, psychological, and

communal resources for continuing the day-to-day struggle and maintaining alive the hope of the poor. It is these cultural and religious practices that are the most fundamental sources of hope in the face of everyday struggles that so often appear hopeless. In that light, liberation theologians began to pay greater attention to *popular religion* (what Cardinal Ratzinger referred to as 'popular piety').

Gustavo Gutierrez himself had already begun to address these issues more systematically and explicitly, for instance, in his *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People* (1984) and *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent* (1987). In 1985, Jon Sobrino published his *Spirituality of Liberation: Toward Political Holiness*. These works sought to articulate a spirituality rooted in the lived faith of the poor. Without denying in any way the socio-political dimension of praxis, they grounded that dimension in the everyday encounter with God's gratuitous love as manifested in the person of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, the preferential option for the poor must be a preferential option for the *God* of the poor. In these later works, Gutierrez emphasized the gratuitous character of God's love as the framework within which the struggle for justice is undertaken.

(p. 815) Indeed, it was precisely this notion of liberation as emerging from the intimate presence of Christ among the poor that gave rise to one of the most provocative theological and ecclesiological themes of liberation theology in the last two decades, namely, the notion of 'the crucified people' elaborated by Ignacio Ellacuria and Jon Sobrino, inspired by their friend Archbishop Oscar Romero (1917–1980). The Salvadoran experience has made important contributions to the development of liberation theology. Of special significance has been the retrieval, especially in Sobrino's work, of Christian martyrdom as a locus of theology and its reconceptualization in a contemporary context. Sobrino avers that the title of 'martyr' should be awarded not only to those Christians who sacrifice their lives because they believe in Christ but also to those Christians who are killed because they *live* like Christ (Sobrino 1994, 2008). In his theology Sobrino is inspired by the lives and deaths of the thousands of Salvadorans who were killed for their service to and solidarity with the poor. Those Christians murdered during the Salvadoran civil war in the 1980s include Sobrino's six Jesuit colleagues at the Central American University (UCA), their housekeeper, and her daughter, who were summarily executed when the Salvadoran military raided the university in 1989. Sobrino had also been deeply affected by the 1980 murder of his friend Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador.

Dialogue with Other Theologies of Liberation

These developments in the liberation theology movement were accompanied and fostered by an increasing dialogue with theologians from other marginalized groups beyond Latin America who themselves, in their own specific contexts, had been doing theologies rooted in a preferential option for the poor. As a result of these conversations, the Latin Americans became increasingly appreciative of the liberation theologies simultaneously emerging among African-Americans, Asians, US Latinos/as, and especially women, not only outside Latin America but also within the region. Consequently, Latin American liberation

theologians broadened their understanding of liberation and oppression to include such issues as race, culture, and gender. A generation of Latin American feminist theologians also emerged, with figures such as the Brazilian theologian Ivone Gebara deeply committed to liberation theology but challenging male liberation theologians to become more attentive to the experience of women, as persons doubly marginalized. Central to that experience, argued Gebara and other feminists, is '*lo cotidiano*', or everyday life, where millions of women encounter both pain and hope, both suffering and joy. Liberation must thus take place not only in the streets but also in the home, where, after all, most poor persons live most of their lives. This is where Christ's presence is experienced most intimately (Gebara 2009).

This emphasis on everyday life also meant that popular religion, or the lived faith of the poor, would take on greater significance in theological reflection. In the early (p. 816) years of the Latin American movement, some theologians such as Juan Luis Segundo had been openly wary of popular religion, since they perceived such a spirituality as an apolitical diversion from the demands of socio-political praxis, thereby functioning as a Marxist 'opium of the people'. As liberation theologians became more methodologically attentive to the everyday lives of the poor as *locus theologicus* the popular piety and spirituality of the poor were increasingly seen as places where the liberating presence of Christ is encountered, even if not in an explicitly political way. Whether in the 'home altars' so prevalent throughout Latin America, devotions to Our Lady of Guadalupe, or Our Lady of Charity, the ubiquitous Good Friday Via Crucis, or prayers recited at the foot of a statue of St Martin de Porres, the everyday spirituality of the poor is the most important source of that awareness of one's dignity as a child of God which is the necessary seedbed for liberation. Here the poor know that Christ accompanies them in their suffering and in their struggles. Thus, like Christ himself on the cross, they can dare to hope against hope.

Some of the earliest and most fruitful theological dialogue has been between Latin American liberation theologians and their intellectual 'cousins', US Latino/a theologians. Indeed, much of North American Christians' earliest exposure to Latin American theology was by means of the pastoral and intellectual connections between these two groups of theologians. In the 1970s Virgilio Elizondo, a Mexican-American priest-theologian newly returned from doctoral studies in France, founded the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) in San Antonio, Texas. With a mission to train pastoral leaders to serve the burgeoning Hispanic population in the United States, MACC would also become a bridge between Latin American liberation theology and the Church in the United States. Elizondo soon began inviting key Latin American figures such as Gustavo Gutierrez to teach courses at MACC.

In his own scholarship, Elizondo had been inspired by Latin American theologians to implement their methodology in his context as a USLatino. In his doctoral dissertation and then in his first book, *Galilean Journey* (1983), Elizondo examined the Gospel through the lens of his own experience as a *mestizo*, a person of mixed race and culture. In so doing he discovered in the Gospels a Christ who himself was a 'mestizo', a Galilean Jew rejected by the Jewish elite in Jerusalem precisely for being from Galilee; Galilean Jews were sus-

pect since, living far from the centre of religio-political authority in Jerusalem, they were surrounded an, especially influenced by Hellenistic-Roman peoples. Moreover, Galilean Jews had their own 'popular religion' with its own distinct features, which was also suspect since it had developed outside the purview and control of the official theological authorities. It was in this milieu, argued Elizondo, that Jesus had grown up and undertaken his ministry. Elizondo's work thus emphasized the cultural, racial, and popular religious dimensions of liberation theology. That is, when Latin Americans are a minority, the themes of race, culture, and religion take on added salience as instruments of marginalization and oppression vis-à-vis the larger society.

Race, culture, and popular religion continue to be defining themes not only in the Americas but in theologies of liberation across the globe. The challenge of enculturation is particularly pressing especially in areas of Asia and Africa where Christians are in the (p. 817) minority; liberation demands that theologians interpret the Christian message in ways that can be comprehended in different cultural contexts and that affirm the value of different cultures. Indeed, today in a world where borders between cultures have become increasingly porous, even notions of enculturation are being questioned. Postcolonial theory, for instance, questions the stability of any culture in light of the historical reality of 'hybridity'. Likewise, intercultural theologies reject the 'essentialization' of culture (as if a culture were some 'thing') opting instead to view cultures as dynamically changing and to locate theological reflection not within culture but between and among dynamically related cultures. Like *mestizaje*, hybridity and interculturality are perceived as privileged socio-historical loci, places where 'otherness' or 'difference' can emerge to resist and challenge the established social order, which will invariably seek to deny the 'other' a voice. It is here, among those persons deemed other, those who are different, that the Wholly Other can be revealed in a special way.

What all theologies of liberation share is their desire to read the Scriptures and interpret the faith through the eyes of the poor, in solidarity with the poor—or in Gutierrez's words, to reflect critically on Christian praxis in the light of theword of God. Consequently, as long as there are poor persons, or marginalized persons, there will be liberation theology. Yet, as we have seen, liberation theology is not a distinct theological system but an evolving, dynamic, changing theological *movement*. Indeed, if liberation theology is true to its method, it *must* change, since the socio-historical reality is itself constantly changing. Each new generation of theologians will bring that new reality, and the questions it provokes, to bear on the questions, issues, and themes developed by previous generations. These changing perspectives will lead not only to new intellectual paradigms, such as those of postcolonial theologies or intercultural theologies, but will necessarily involve a *critical* retrieval of the insights of earlier generations.

The danger of not viewing liberation theology as a movement (instead of a theological system) is that one might identify liberation theology with its initial configuration and, once this inevitably changes, assume that liberation theology is dead. Moreover, the success of liberation theology should be measured, at least in part, by the influence its insights have had on Christian theology more broadly; to a certain extent, the goal of libera-

tion theology is precisely to make itself obsolete. Indeed, one might argue that the preferential option for the poor has become an important principle in Christian theology as a whole and, specifically, in Catholic theology and social teaching.

That very success, however, begs the further question, 'Has liberation theology been co-opted and, thus, lost its critical edge?' This question is today being asked by a new generation of theologians who wonder whether the increased focus on culture, popular religion, and spirituality has come at great cost, namely, the loss of a historical project of social transformation (Petrella 2006). The postmodern rejection of metanarratives makes the articulation of any historical project problematic. Indeed, the argument in favour of a preferential option for the poor is made much more difficult in an environment where tolerance of all options is the ultimate value and, thus, *any* option or preference is presumed to necessarily imply intolerance of others. To meet this challenge, liberation theologies must continue to articulate the *theological* grounds for the preferential option (p. 818) for the poor, as this has been so powerfully done by Gutierrez among others. In the end, the preferential option for the poor safeguards God's transcendence. The preferential option for the poor safeguards the gratuity of God's love against the all-too-human temptation to identify God's love with our society's loves, to assume that what (and whom) we value and reward as a society is also what God values and rewards. What liberation theology reminds us is that the human other is in the best (again, not the only) position to recognize the Divine Other. The persons who do not make sense in our world are the persons in a privileged position to recognize the God who also does not make sense, does not fit in—the God who always remains Mystery. This is the God who is revealed in the person of a criminal hanging from a cross. In short, the God of liberation theology is, in Virgilio Elizondo's words, the 'God of incredible surprises' (Elizondo 2003).

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New Ecclesial Movements and Communities

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers the flowering of new religious communities after the Second Vatican Council. The Council's ecclesiological constitution Lumen gentium emphasizes the charismatic dimension of the Church at some key points, although without pitting this dimension against the hierarchical. Recent charismatic movements within the Church are the latest manifestation of a constant feature of the Church's life, from early Christian ascetic communities, through to the new religious orders of the sixteenth and then the nineteenth centuries. The latter sections of the chapter consider a series of recent movements and their different charisms: Opus Dei, Charismatic Renewal, the Emmanuel Community, the Community of the Beatitudes, the Neocatechumenal Way, Communion and Liberation, and Focolare.

Keywords: charismatic, pneumatology, Holy Spirit, community, Opus Dei, Communion and Liberation, Focolare

The Charismatic Dimension of the Church

FOR Pope John Paul II one of the significant achievements of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was its rediscovery of 'the charismatic dimension as one of [the Church's] constitutive elements' (*PCL* 1999: 221). The pope was referring to the constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* (*LG*), where there are three references to the Church's charismatic dimension in the first two chapters. In chapter 1 the Council teaches that the Holy Spirit bestows upon the Church 'varied hierarchic and charismatic gifts', adding later that among the 'gifts' given by the Spirit 'the primacy belongs to the grace of the apostles to whose authority the Spirit himself subjects even those who are endowed with charisms'. Having established the subordination of the charismatic to the hierarchical dimension of the Church, the Council proceeds in chapter 2 to make it clear that nevertheless the charismatic dimension is indispensable to the Church:

> It is not only through the sacraments and ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the people, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (compare 1 Cor. 12:11), he also distributes

> special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church, as it is written, 'the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit' (1 Cor. 12:7). Whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church
>
> (*LG* 4, 7, 12).

(p. 821) This teaching on the importance of the charisms represented a significant victory for the reforming party at the Second Vatican Council. Unfortunately, an influential article by Hans Küng in the liberal review *Concilium*, which he subsequently incorporated in his book *The Church* (1967), published the same year that the Council ended, was taken to be an authoritative guide to the texts in *Lumen gentium*. Thus, in a standard commentary on the documents of Vatican II, Küng's article was simply quoted as the accepted authority on the Council's meaning:

> The *charismata* are not primarily extraordinary but common; they are not of one kind, but manifold; they are not limited to a special group of persons, but truly universal in the Church. All this implies also that they are not a thing of the past (possible and real only in the early Church), but eminently contemporary and actual; they do not hover on the periphery of the Church but are eminently central and essential to it. In this sense one should speak of a *charismatic structure of the Church* which embraces and goes beyond the structure of it government
>
> (Küng in Grillmeier 1967: 165).

However, a more recent commentary on the Council's documents criticizes Küng's uncritical concept of charism as denoting all ecclesial services and functions. To call Christian love, as Küng does, the highest and most ordinary of the charisms is to assume that a charism is simply a gift as opposed to a special grace given to a particular member of the Church. If all that the Council was saying is that all Christian virtues are gifts, then there would have been no dispute over the inclusion of the charismatic dimension in the constitution on the Church, since both the conservative and reforming parties would have agreed that the Christian virtues are gifts. But the issue was whether there are special graces given to individuals that help to build up the Church or whether the Church is to be seen as sustained primarily and for the most part (except on quite extraordinary and quasi-miraculous occasions) by the ministry and sacraments of the ordained ministry. Küng's definition of a charism effectively robs the word of any special significance and it is hard to see how the charisms could provide the Church with a 'structure'. Nevertheless, Küng clearly wishes to replace the hierarchical structure of the Church with a charismatic structure and ignores the Council's insistence that the charismatic dimension of the Church must be regulated by its hierarchical dimension. It is true that in the New Testament the Greek word *charisma* often does only mean 'gift' in a general sense, but there are also clear instances of it meaning specifically a special gift given to an individual for the good of the Church, and that is how it is used in *Lumen gentium*. Scholastic

theologians had referred to a charism in this sense with the phrase *gratia gratis data* (‘grace freely given’). But in the official Latin text of *Lumen gentium* the Latin transliteration of the Greek word *charisma* is used (Vanhoye 1988).

The paradox is that the result of evacuating the term ‘charism’ of any real significance is effectively to restore a clerical ecclesiology, for, if everything is charismatic then nothing is specifically charismatic, and effectively we are back in a Church where in (p. 822) practice ‘only the sacraments … and the ministrations’ of the clergy count for anything. It is not surprising that there then arises a demand for the ordination of married men and women.

The occasion on which Pope John Paul II pointed out the significance of the Council’s rediscovery of the charismatic dimension of the Church was the World Congress of the Ecclesial Movements held in Rome in 1998. In his address the pope insisted that, far from there being any opposition between the charismatic and hierarchical dimensions of the Church, they are actually complementary and ‘co-essential as it were to the Church’s constitution’. And, in view of the rise of the so-called ecclesial movements and communities, this rediscovery of the Church’s charismatic dimension was ‘providential’ (*PCL* 1999: 221).

At the same congress Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (the future Pope Benedict XVI), provided a historical context for this new charismatic phenomenon in the Church (Ratzinger in *PCL* 1999: 23–51), pointing out that the history of the Church shows that at certain periods there have been widespread movements of the Spirit that have profoundly changed and renewed the Church. The Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century ‘probably’ provided ‘the clearest instance of what a movement is’:

> movements generally derive their origin from a charismatic leader and take shape in concrete communities, inspired by the life of their founder; they attempt to live the Gospel anew, in its totality, and recognise the Church without hesitation as the ground of their life without which they could not exist
>
> (*PCL* 1999: 47–48).

Ratzinger linked these movements of the Spirit with the universal as opposed to the local Church. Thus the first of the major movements, monasticism, arose in the third century after the universal ministry of the Apostles—who were not bishops of local churches but apostles of the whole Church—died out and was replaced by the local episcopal ministry in the course of the second century. This retreat, literally into the desert, was ‘a deliberate abandonment of the firmly established structure of the local Church’. Spiritually, it represented ‘a flight from a Christianity that was progressively adapting itself to the needs of secular life, in order to follow uncompromisingly in the footsteps of Christ’. And the monastic charism offered an alternative to the pastoral ministry of the episcopate and clergy of the local churches: ‘… the monastic movement created a new centre of life that did not abolish the local ecclesial structure of the post-apostolic Church, but that did not simply coincide with it either’. Ratzinger was careful not to imply that the institutional

and charismatic became totally separated: instead, monasticism was 'active … as a life-giving force, a kind of reservoir from which the local Church could draw truly spiritual clergy in whom the fusion of institution and charism was constantly renewed' (*PCL* 1999: 37–39). For, far from being isolated from the larger Church and confined to the monastic enclosure, monasticism became a great missionary movement from the end of the sixth century, famous examples being St Augustine in England, St Patrick in Ireland, and St Boniface in Germany. The papacy had certainly not created the charism but the papacy appreciated its missionary potential and became its great (p. 823) supporter. Ratzinger points out that, because the pope is not merely bishop of the local Church of Rome, but has a universal ministry in a unique way that no local bishop has, he has a special interest in encouraging spiritual movements such as monasticism which extend beyond the scope and structure of the local Church and have a special apostolic dynamism.

This first big charismatic eruption in the Church was followed by the mendicant charisms in the thirteenth century of St Francis and St Dominic. Francis recalled the Church to evangelical poverty and renunciation, but again this was accompanied by evangelization. Conflict with the local Church was inevitable, and when this came to a head at the University of Paris between the secular clergy and the new mendicant orders, it was the Dominican St Thomas Aquinas who defended the new evangelizing movement against the institutional status quo. And Thomas makes more explicit the understanding already present in monasticism that the religious life means not only embracing chastity, poverty, and obedience, but also the universal proclamation of the Gospel. The dramatic episode in Paris shows how the self-enclosed local Church finds it hard to tolerate an irruption of new spiritual life, whereas it was again the papacy, with its universal ecclesial authority, that supported this new movement of the Spirit with all its enormous apostolic potential. Significantly, Ratzinger adds: 'all this gave a great boost to the development of the doctrine of primacy', since the Petrine office 'was now understood anew in the light of its apostolic roots' (*PCL* 1999: 43).

The sixteenth century saw the rise of new movements of evangelization, among which the Society of Jesus was the most prominent. The charism of St Ignatius Loyola again coincided with the needs of the Church of the time. Faced with the Protestant Reformation and the urgent need for reforms within the Church, this new active priestly religious order, unconstrained by the limitations of the cloister, was a highly mobile force that was explicitly at the service of the pope, whether in the field of education or the missions. The Jesuits also fought to revive the Church in the parts of Europe that had been lost to the Protestant Reformation. Not surprisingly, this new form of religious life aroused much the same kind of hostility and suspicion as another Spanish-born movement that was to arise in the twentieth century, Opus Dei.

Then in the nineteenth century appeared a new phenomenon: the strictly missionary congregations, particularly of women engaged in nursing and teaching. Since these congregations were concerned with the evangelization of foreign countries untouched by the Gospel, the problem of conflict with the local institutional Church was averted. And in-

deed the local Church was animated and strengthened by this new missionary movement of the Spirit.

Opus Dei (founded in 1928) would not normally be counted among the so-called ecclesial movements and communities of the twentieth century. Yet the ecclesiology it manifests is precisely that of this new charismatic surge in the life of the Church. For a movement or community can truly be described as 'ecclesial'—as opposed to lay or clerical or religious—only if it is open to all the baptized in their various states of life. And that is what characterizes Opus Dei, which consists of married or single members (the 'supernumeraries'), celibate laymembers or 'numeraries' normally but not always living (p. 824) in so-called 'centres' (as well as celibates living with their families or on their own called 'associates'), and priests who are drawn from the 'numeraries' (and 'associates'). Again, it is striking how even in the 'centres' of the male 'numeraries' where there is a resident priest, it is not the priest who is the 'director' or superior but one of the lay 'numeraries'. As in the ecclesial movements and communities, this is not in any sense a downgrading of the ministerial priesthood but rather a recognition of the essentially sacerdotal character of the priest who acts as chaplain to the community. The women's houses also have a priest chaplain. However, spiritual direction is not confined to the priest but is also given by the lay 'numeraries' who undergo a gradual but intense formation in spirituality and theology, eventually completing all the studies that would normally lead to priestly ordination. These lay 'numeraries' are not canonically 'religious' or even 'consecrated', but they nevertheless make a private commitment to celibacy and, like all other members of Opus Dei, to living the Christian life in accordance with the spirit of Opus Dei. It should be pointed out, however, that although the 'directors' of Opus Dei 'centres' are laypeople (both men and women), the government of Opus Dei as a whole is entrusted to a 'prelate' who has to be a priest, and each 'region' of Opus Dei is governed by a regional vicar who must be a priest, although again it should be stressed that he is assisted by a 'council' of men 'numeraries' and a 'council' of women 'numeraries'.

In his paper at the 1998 congress, Ratzinger pointed out that 'apostolic movements appear in ever new forms in history—necessarily so, because they are the Holy Spirit's answer to the ever changing situations in which the Church lives'. Obviously, they cannot be 'established by administrative diktat, still less … established and systematically promoted by ecclesiastical authority' (*PCL* 1999: 46). Nevertheless, Ratzinger might have added that, while the Second Vatican Council did not establish or promote the movements (which it does not mention, and some of which in fact predate the Council), nonetheless we find key features of the Council's ecclesiology embodied in in these new movements and communities. It is this ecclesiology of organic communion that also characterizes Opus Dei as a forerunner of the ecclesial movements and communities.

It is in its first two revolutionary chapters that *Lumen gentium* defines the essence of the Church. They are revolutionary because they eschew the Tridentine hierarchical model of the Church in favour of a scriptural ecclesiology of the organic communion of the baptized. The first chapter, 'The Mystery of the Church', defines the Church as first and foremost 'a mystery' and 'in the nature of sacrament—a sign and instrument, that is, of com-

munion with God and of unity among all men' (*LG* 1). Citing St Paul's 'First Letter to the Corinthians', the Council teaches: 'The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple'. The Church is a temple of the Holy Spirit because each of its individual members has received the Holy Spirit in baptism. This community of the baptized is the 'new People of God' (*LG* 9). According to the second chapter, 'The People of God', this 'communion of life, love, and truth' is used by Christ 'as the instrument of salvation of all' (*LG* 9). All the baptized share in 'the common priesthood of the faithful', but there is also 'the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood', 'each in its own proper way' participating in 'the one priesthood of Christ' (*LG* 10). The 'organic (p. 825) structure' of this 'priestly community is brought into operation through the sacraments'. And the chapter then lists the seven sacraments, including that of Holy Orders. But what is so striking about these first two chapters is the absence of any attempt to describe the Church in terms of clergy and laity, as though the Church were divided into two halves. Instead, what is brought before us is an organic communion sustained by the seven sacraments, in which the hierarchical dimension is balanced and complemented by the charismatic dimension.

Before proceeding to look at some of the major ecclesial movements and communities, it is important to be clear that not all twentieth-century spiritual initiatives in the Church are necessarily 'ecclesial' in character. Thus the Legionaries of Christ is an active religious order and the Community of St John is a monastic order. It is true that the Legionaries order has a lay association called 'Regnum Christi' and the Community of St John has secular oblates, but this does not make them an ecclesial movement or community, since religious orders and communities commonly have 'third order' laymembers living in the world. Nor is the Jerusalem Community an ecclesial community but a monastic community, with two sections for men and women, that seeks to maintain a monastic presence in the city, although it, too, has adherents who join in the daily liturgy.

The Ecclesial Movements and Communities

While having the 'ecclesial' character in common, the movements and communities vary greatly not only in their particular charisms but also in their structure. At one end of the scale is the very loosely structured Charismatic Renewal with its prayer groups and communities. At the other extreme is the highly hierarchical Neocatechumenal Way. It is only possible here to give brief descriptions of the largest of the movements and of three of the most important ecclesial communities.

Charismatic Renewal

The distinguishing characteristic of Charismatic Renewal is the so-called 'Baptism in the Spirit' whereby baptized Christians are through prayer enabled by the Holy Spirit to experience the same power as the Apostles did at Pentecost and to receive the same gifts as they did, including the gifts of healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues. There was no founder or founders exactly of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, although a retreat for stu-

dents in 1967 at the Catholic University of Duquesne in the United States, at which a Charismatic woman from the Episcopal Church shared her experiences, can be said to have launched the movement in the Catholic Church. However, Catholics had already (p. 826) begun praying with Pentecostals and Charismatics from various denominations. Since this would not have been possible before the Second Vatican Council with its teaching on ecumenism, Catholic Charismatic Renewal can certainly be seen as one of the fruits of the Council.

The Duquesne experience came to the notice of two American leaders in Cursillo, a lay rather than ecclesial movement, who then helped to produce 'The Life in the Spirit Seminars', consisting of seven sessions on the basic Christian *kerugma* (proclamation) and the importance of conversion, leading up to 'Baptism in the Spirit'. This Pentecostal phrase was borrowed to describe an experience that enables the Christian to realize, that is, make real the sacrament of baptism in which they received the gift of the Holy Spirit and the sacrament of confirmation whereby this gift was confirmed. These seminars helped the growth of Charismatic prayer groups and subsequently the organization of 'days of renewal' as well as conferences and retreats.

The charisms or gifts of the Holy Spirit that Charismatic Renewal emphasizes are to be found 1 Cor. 12:7–12, Rom. 12:6–9, and Eph. 4:7–14. The most controversial of them is the gift of tongues, which usually means praying in unintelligible language, and only very occasionally speaking in an unknown foreign language as at Pentecost and on a couple of other occasions in Acts. The purpose of this gift, it is believed, is that it enables the person praying to surrender to the power of the Spirit or to pray in a way that could never be put into words, as St Paul puts it (Rom. 8:26). The main purpose of the gift of prophecy is to proclaim the will or Word of God in a particular situation, while actually foretelling the future is considered to be very rare. The recovery at the Second Vatican Council of the healing nature of the Sacrament of the Sick, which had come to be seen as the Church's final blessing of a dying person ('extreme unction'), has been accompanied by the Charismatic Renewal's extension of the Church's traditional healing ministry as a result of Catholics encountering the practice of non-sacramental Pentecostals praying for the sick. Charismatic Renewal has also stressed the importance of praying for inner healing of the effects of traumatic experiences. Discernment is urged with regard to all apparent charisms, which, it is recognized, may actually have a human or even evil source, and which may be used to control and manipulate. Discernment is particularly necessary when prayer is deemed to be appropriate for the deliverance of evil spirits that are causing suffering.

Although there is no central hierarchical leadership of the movement, International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, run by a council headed by a president and with offices in Rome, seeks to promote communication and cooperation within the movement and with the Holy See.

The Emmanuel Community and the Community of the Beatitudes

The Charismatic Renewal has led to the foundation of many lay and 'covenant' communities, including important international ecclesial communities such as the Emmanuel (p. 827) Community and the Community of the Beatitudes. The former began in 1972 in Paris when Pierre Goursat and Martine Catta, after hearing the story of a French couple's experience of the American Charismatic Renewal, began a prayer group with the characteristic Charismatic elements of praise, sharing the Word of God, teaching, and testimony. However, Eucharistic Adoration was, from the beginning, central to the Emmanuel charism and members are encouraged to spend lengthy daily periods of Adoration. The Community is open to all the baptized in their different states of life, but laymembers may also offer themselves for the priesthood as well as for consecrated celibacy. By joining the 'Fraternity of Jesus'. members of the Community make a fuller commitment involving availability for mission. The Community is made up of residential and non-residential 'households' consisting of up to eight people from the different states of life who meet regularly in the evening. And there are larger monthly community meetings at the weekend. There is a 'moderator' elected by the International Council of the Community.

The Beatitudes Communuity was founded in 1973 by two French couples, all but one of whom were Protestants, who, however, became Catholics after Gérard Croissant, one of their number, met the paralyzed mystic Marthe Robin (In 2008 he was expelled from the community, having been found guilty of the sexual abuse of sisters in the community, and he was ordered by the Church to live a life of silence and penance). She had been instrumental in founding the first ecclesial community in the Church, the Foyer de Charité, when in 1936 she told Father Georges Finet that it was God's will that he should found 'a Foyer [a home] resplendent with Light, Charity, and Love' and spoke of a new Pentecost of love, in which the Church would be renewed by the laity attaining to the fullness of their baptismal vocation. Each Foyer consists of a priest, a responsible lay person (male or female) who assists the priest, and a community of celibate laypeople who consecrate their lives to the work of the Foyer. A married couple and family may also be attached to the community in addition to the larger outer association of friends of the Foyer. The principal work is giving five-day retreats (see *Structures* 1999).

In the Community of the Beatitudes, priests, single people, some of whom are consecrated to celibacy, and families all live together uniquely in a community under the same roof in conscious imitation of the first Christian community in the Acts of the Apostles. There is daily Eucharistic Adoration, the spirituality being essentially contemplative in the Carmelite tradition (the writings of St Thérese of Lisieux are particularly influential). There is a special emphasis on the Jewish roots of Christianity, as well as a particular interest in Eastern Orthodox liturgy and art. Each community is led by a 'shepherd' who may be a priest or a layperson, with a general moderator, assisted by a council, presiding over all the communities.

The Neocatechumenal Way

The Neocatechumenal Way began in 1963 when a young Spanish painter Kiko Argüello, who had had a conversion experience after a period of atheism as a student, returned to (p. 828) his parents' house for Christmas, where he found the cook in tears in the kitchen. Spain was still a very poor country and he learned that the woman lived with her drunken and abusive husband in one of the shanty towns on the outskirts of Madrid. After visiting her in the squalid shack where she lived, he seemed to hear a call from God to go and live with the family in their tiny kitchen. The scene of utter desolation in the slum so horrified him that, on completing his national service, he decided that in the event of the Second Coming he would want Christ to find him at the feet of the poorest of the poor. His inspiration came from Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), a French priest who lived a life of austere simplicity in North Africa: to live in silence at the feet of Christ crucified. Accordingly, in 1964 he went to live in a shack in the shanty town, taking nothing with him except his Bible and guitar. Curious as to who he was and why he was there, the slum-dwellers discovered he was a Christian and began to ask him questions about the Gospel. The group that gathered round him became the first Neocatechumenal community and his talks the first so-called 'catechesis'. He was soon joined by a young Spanish woman, Carmen Hernández, who had just completed a theology degree at a missionary institute. Their work of evangelization attracted the attention of the then Archbishop of Madrid, who encouraged them to bring their method of catechesis to the parishes. In 1968 Kiko and Carmen brought the Way to Rome. Gradually it spread through the world not without much opposition.

In 2008 the statutes of the Neocatechumenal Way were finally approved by Pope Benedict XVI (see *Statute* 2002). According to the statutes, it is 'one of the forms of diocesan implementation of Christian initiation and of ongoing education in faith' (art.1, #2). Although it may be used to initiate the unbaptized, the Way is primarily intended for the lapsed, those insufficiently evangelized and catechized, those desiring to deepen their faith, and those Christians seeking to come into full communion with the Catholic Church. It is also open to priests and religious wishing to renew their baptism.

At the invitation of the parish priest, a team of catechists offers the parish fifteen catecheses over a period of two months. These are given in three parts in order to correspond with the 'tripod' of the Word of God, liturgy, and community which underlies the Christian life. First, there is the announcement of the Good News of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the call to conversion, which culminates in the sacrament of reconciliation. Second, there is the announcement of Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of the Scriptures, which is celebrated by the reception of a Bible from the bishop (or parish priest). Third, the initial catecheses culminate in a final weekend retreat or 'convivence' when the Eucharist is celebrated as the key to Christian community. A community is then formed of those wishing to undertake the post-baptismal catechumenate as a way of rediscovering their baptism. What is termed 'a lay responsible' and one or more 'co-responsible(s)' are then elected and confirmed by the parish priest and catechists to help with the organization of the community and keep it true to the statutes of the Neocate-

chumenal Way. Each week the community celebrates the Word of God with four readings from the Old and New Testaments, with the aid of the writings of the Fathers and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as well as other documents of the Magisterium and works of spiritual writers. This celebration is prepared by a group from (p. 829) the community, as is the weekly Saturday evening Eucharist (open to all the members of the parish), which contains certain modifications of the Roman Rite. The following Sunday morning families celebrate Lauds at home with their children who are invited to begin the Way at the age of thirteen. There is a monthly convivence at which the community members celebrate Lauds and share their experiences in the Christian life. In time the community elects catechists, with the approval of their parish priest and catechists, who will be trained in their turn to evangelize and guide new communities.

The 'precatechumenate' (the stages and terminology are the same as the official Rite of the Christian Initiation of Adults) is divided into two 'steps'. The first step, which lasts about two years, in which simple scriptural themes are studied, concludes with a 'scrutiny', as does the second step in which the great stages of salvation history are celebrated. The 'scrutinies' are intended to help the catechumens in conversion but without interfering with the individual conscience and the internal forum. In the 'catechumenate' the neocatechumens are introduced to the Liturgy of the Hours and begin to pray Lauds and the Office of Readings each day. They also 'learn to have a time of silent prayer and of the prayer of the heart' (art.20, #1), as well as to practise *lectio divina*, in which the Word of God is transformed into prayer. In addition, they rediscover the Creed and are sent to preach it, two by two, to people in the parish. After studying the Creed article by article, they proclaim it in a celebration in Lent. Before receiving catechesis on the Our Father, they make a pilgrimage to a Marian shrine to welcome Mary as their mother as well as professing their loyalty to the pope. In addition to studying the individual petitions of the Our Father, they also consider Mary under her various titles. In the third and final phase of the Neocatechumenate, the 'election,' the Neocatechumens study the Sermon on the Mount, which they endeavour to realize in their own lives. After renewing their baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil presided over by the bishop, when they are dressed in white as a reminder of their baptism, they go to the Eucharist every day during Eastertide as well as making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The completion of the Way does not mean the end of the community, which continues the weekly celebration of the Word of God and the Saturday vigil Eucharist.

The Neocatechumenal Way is under the overall charge of the 'International Responsible Team' consisting of the original two lay initiators together with a priest. They nominate similarly constituted national or regional or diocesan responsible teams. In 1988 the first missionary 'Redemptoris Mater' seminary was founded to prepare priests for the local diocese. In the same year the first families on mission were sent out into the world by the pope. Already volunteer catechists had been sent abroad in teams of 'itinerant' catechists, consisting of a priest, a married couple, and a single man, or alternatively a priest, a single man, and a single woman, to begin the Neocatechumenal Way in various countries.

Communion and Liberation

In 1954 an Italian priest, Luigi Giussani, who was teaching in a seminary, met some senior-school students on a train. Although nominally Catholic, they clearly considered (p. 830) that Christianity was irrelevant to their lives. Anxious to communicate his own experience to young people, Giussani left the seminary and began to teach religion in a senior school in Milan. He soon gathered round him a group of students impressed by his insistence that it is through personal experience that we discover that Jesus Christ is the answer to our human needs.

He did not attempt to establish a movement but instead introduced to the already-existing Student Youth, a wing of Catholic Action, a method of evangelization based on two so-called ‘pillars’. One of the pillars, the ‘ray’, was a weekly meeting to discuss a passage from literature, or the Bible, or a current event in terms of one’s own experience and in connection with the relevance of Christianity to daily life; the second pillar was the ‘initiative’ to involve oneself in some cultural, charitable, spiritual, or sporting activity as an authentic Christian experience. After the student riots of 1968, Student Youth was split in two and Giussani’s followers became the movement called ‘Communion and Liberation’, that is, communion with the Church where one encounters the true freedom of Christ in people who possess a new, more fulfilled humanity that has been changed by the encounter with Christ. For Christianity is above all an event whereby God comes in search of man by becoming man.

There is no formal membership of Communion and Liberation apart from attendance at the weekly ‘school of community’ when a particular text from one of Giussani’s writings or a magisterial document is discussed in relation to one’s daily experience of life. However, for those who wish to make a special formal commitment, there is the ‘Fraternity of Communion and Liberation’, belonging to which involves a minimal rule of daily prayer, participation in retreats, and a commitment to support charitable, missionary, and cultural projects promoted or supported by the Fraternity. There is also the ‘Fraternity of the Missionaries of St Charles Borromeo’, with its own seminary in Rome, whose members are available for service anywhere in the world. There is a special fraternity for diocesan priests, called ‘Studium Christi’. In addition, there are two fraternities for those who wish to dedicate themselves totally through virginity, the ‘Memores Domini’ who live in community houses, both male and female, while working in the world, and the ‘Fraternity of St Joseph’ for those not wishing to live in community.

Central to the charism of the movement is the idea of encountering Christ in the companionship of friends who live their unity with each other in Christ. Communities therefore regularly go on holiday together, normally in places of natural beauty. The truth about the human heart that finds fulfilment in Christ is also discovered through the great artistic works of beauty, so members of Communion and Liberation have collaborated with publishers to publish out-of-print works and with record companies to bring out classical CDs with commentaries by Giussani. The movement also publishes an official monthly magazine. An annual ‘Meeting for Friendship among Peoples’ is held in Rimini that seeks to en-

gage with all aspects of contemporary culture in the spirit of St Paul's dictum, 'Test all things and retain what is good' (1 Thess. 5:21). Nor does the movement shrink from involvement in the political and social sphere in order to provide an authentic Catholic voice in the secular society.

(p. 831) The movement is led by the president of the 'Fraternity of Communion and Liberation', who may be a layperson or a priest, assisted by a general council of priests and laypeople. There are national and regional 'responsibles', also assisted by a group of people called the 'diaconia', as well as responsibles for the local communities.

Focolare

The Focolare movement began in Trent in 1943 when a young primary school teacher, Chiara Lubich, who had taken a vow of chastity, gathered round her a few young women friends in a city devastated by bombing. They decided that the only 'ideal' that could not be destroyed was the God of love. The spiritual warmth that seemed to emanate from the group suggested the nickname 'focolare' or 'hearth', 'fireplace'. The conviction of God's personal love for them and the commandment to love others as Christ loved them received a new dimension when a priest asked them what was the greatest suffering of Jesus. Chiara thought it must have been the Agony in the Garden, but the priest replied that it was when Jesus called out in desolation on the Cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matt. 27:46) It was then that Chiara and her companions chose the crucified and forsaken Jesus as the 'ideal' of their lives, and began to recognize the forsaken Jesus in every suffering. Furthermore, they saw that the forsaken Jesus was the key to responding to his prayer, 'May they all be one' (John 17:21), the key to unity among human beings. By being forsaken even apparently by the Father, Jesus re-established man's unity with God. Therefore, when his followers embrace the forsaken Jesus in a situation of disunity they are able to help re-establish unity.

The first Focolare house for Chiara and her companions was founded in 1944 in Trent. Interestingly, just as the Neocatechumenal Way sees the model for its communities as the Holy Family of Nazareth in which Jesus grew in 'wisdom' (Luke 2:52), since in them the Neocatechumens aspire to grow in faith, so Focolare sees its celibate members as virgins seeking to imitate the life of love of the three virgins of Nazareth. The first men's house was founded in 1948. Those among them who are ordained to the priesthood remain in their Focolare, but diocesan priests who join Focolare continue to live in the outside community. The priests help to animate the 'New Parishes Movement', which seeks to renew parish life through unity. In 1948 the first married Focolarini were admitted as integral members of Focolare communities: although not living in Focolare houses, nevertheless in their own family situation they try to live the same three evangelical counsels as the celibate Focolarini. They, in turn, animate the 'New Families Movement' for unity within the family. In 1967 'Gen' ('New Generation') was founded, which has sections for young adults and children.

The focal point of the movement is the monthly ‘Word of Life’, a sentence from Scripture, which is discussed in small groups in the light of experience. Annually, there is a week-long ‘Mariapolis’ or city of Mary, a summer holiday gathering. However, there are also some permanent cities of Mary, small towns intended to embody the spirit of Focolare with ‘schools’ lasting from two weeks to a full two years (p. 832) for Focolarini. The official name of the movement is, in fact, ‘The Work of Mary’ as it seeks to bring Jesus spiritually into the world as Mary did physically. The president consequently has to be a woman who is assisted by a priest as co-president and a council. Regionally, too, the movement is governed by a female and male Focolarino, assisted by a council.

Since the focus of the movement is unity, there is special emphasis on dialogue with both non-Christians and non-Catholic Christians. The movement has, with its special charism for unity, founded ‘Youth for Unity’, ‘Volunteers of God’, ‘The New Humanity Movement’, ‘The Movement for Unity’ among politicians, and the ‘Economy of Communion’ which creates unity between employers and employees. Finally, Focolare seeks to foster unity between the new ecclesial movements and communities.

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Catholic Feminist Theology

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter charts the history of Catholicism's feminist theology. It begins with an overview of contexts that contributed to the development of Catholic feminist theology, with particular emphasis on the role of the Second Vatican Council (1963–1965) in the surge of feminist theological dialogue that began in the Catholic Church in the 1960s and 1970s. It then considers various feminist theories that differed in their strategies for overcoming injustice against women, especially the first-, second-, and third-wave feminisms. It also examines Catholic feminist theology's viewpoints on the methodological concerns of hermeneutics, language, and praxis, along with its interpretation of Scripture and Christian history, what language we should be using to name and call upon the God in whom we believe, Jesus' redemption of humanity from sin; Mary and the saints; Trinity; and creation.

Keywords: Catholicism, feminist theology, Second Vatican Council, Catholic Church, feminism, hermeneutics, language, praxis, Scripture, God

CATHOLIC feminist theology in its plurality of forms is a style of theological discourse that appreciatively and critically analyses and employs the theological tradition by placing it in dialogue with the multiplicity of women's experience. It presupposes that the theological task has always entailed an interaction between the content of revelation and the varieties of human experience. For, persons can only hear, comprehend, speak, and live according to revelation's word from within their human standpoint that is multiperspectival due to historical, social, and cultural variations. Thus, feminist theologians assert that human beings are guided by the Holy Spirit to receive, understand, give language to, and practise revelation's truth, and that they accomplish these acts in ways that are directly influenced by their experiences of gender, ethnicity, and class.

Modernity's insistence on the significance of a subject's location for her or his epistemological processes motivates the feminist theologian to pinpoint aspects of the tradition that lack an appropriate emphasis on the contributions made by women in the formation and reception of Scripture and tradition. In contemplating Christianity's stages of development and their effects on contemporary Christian practice, feminist theologians see

what happens when certain voices—which are equally indispensable for articulating and living Christian faith—are ignored. They observe where Christianity has been swayed by socio-cultural patterns of patriarchy, where men claim the power to define, subjugate, and silence female subjects. Feminist theologians also trace patriarchy's impact with its institutionalization of the duality between authority and vulnerability and the many forms it has taken: for example, men versus women, majority ethnic group versus minority ethnic groups, rich versus poor, and human beings versus the earth's resources.

No matter what form patriarchy has taken, feminist theology cries out against it, because it contradicts Christianity's belief in Christ's redemption of humanity that includes liberation from the sins of structural violence and injustice. The Christ-event calls for the conversion of power relations to reflect the Pauline message of unity in Christ that (p. 834) eradicates the humanly erected barriers between races, classes, and genders: 'For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3:27–28). The reforming vision of feminist theology is inspired by this scriptural expression of the Kingdom of God; questing after the community's embodiment of the reality that Christ has accomplished, feminist theologians encourage a mutually beneficial dialogue between the liberating praxis of feminist thought and the Christian tradition's narrative of redemption in Christ and the Spirit. The goal of this dialogue is the community's attentiveness to an array of both women's and men's voices from all over the world, every one of whom provides an important piece of the complex, Spirit-guided undertaking of receiving, interpreting, communicating, and faithfully living in accord with the truth of Christian revelation.

Contexts for Development

The Second Vatican Council (1963–65) was the impetus behind the surge of feminist theological dialogue that began in the Catholic Church in the 1960s and 1970s. The council's openness to the modern world, its awareness of women's situation in the world, and its encouragement of the laity in their crucial vocation in the Church, all fostered the expansion of women's theological involvement in the Church's watchfulness for the 'signs of the times'. The Council's 1965 text *Gaudium et spes* (*GS*), The *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, names the inauspicious signs of poverty, hunger, and inequality: 'People hounded by hunger call upon those better off. Where they have not yet won it, women claim for themselves an equity with men before the law and in fact (*GS* 9). Affirming these desires for justice and convinced of humankind's true nature as community, it lists 'prostitution and the selling of women and children' as 'infamies' that regard women and children as pawns for financial gain rather than as the persons of dignity that God created them to be (*GS* 27). Stating that these social sins 'dishonour the Creator,' *Gaudium et spes* affirms God's passionate longing for women's liberation from every kind of injustice and locates freedom's origin in Christ's redemptive act.

Women welcomed the opportunity to embrace the vocation of theologian. They began to enter the halls of theological schools in order to take part in the conversation between the Church and the world's oppressed peoples that was endorsed by the Second Vatican Council. Identifying with the members of the world's oppressed populations, Catholic feminist theologians studied secular feminist discourse that examined the social, political, and economic structures that were responsible for women's discrimination and subjugation. These pioneering women theologians brought the academic disciplines of feminist theory and theology together as conversation partners. They took seriously the various methods for social reform that were explicitly articulated during feminism's 'second wave' (the 1960s to the 1980s) (for the 'three waves' of feminism, see Clifford 2001: 21–28). This second wave inherited its momentum from (p. 835) 'first-wave' feminism's primary achievement of women's suffrage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This vital gain stimulated the ongoing campaign for women's rights and equality in every aspect of society that was continued by the liberal feminism of the second wave. The United Nations General Assembly's 1967 *Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* validated liberal feminism's push for women's civil rights when it combated all social, political, and economic forms of prejudice against women and championed women's equal opportunities for education and employment.

Diverging from liberal feminism's stress on the individual's right to freedom in the existing political and economic institutions, other feminist theories offered disparate strategies for overcoming injustice against women. Some concentrated on the liberating potential of women's natural combination of wisdom and embodiment that unites logic and feeling (cultural/radical feminism) to counteract the dualisms of patriarchy. Others focused on the socio-historical forces that exploited the differences between the sexes to support patterns of gendered domination and submission that require refashioning by new conceptualizations of the meaning of 'difference' (socialist and postmodern feminisms) (on liberal, radical, and socialist feminisms see Hinsdale 1991: 160–161).

Feminist theologians debated the insights of these and other feminist theories that emerged during feminism's second wave in order to develop constructive, interpretive questions that they could address while reading the ancient sources of the Christian tradition. Moulding their inquiries with contemporary women's experience as discerned by feminist discourse, present-day women could more accurately hear women's voices from the past that they now understood to be speaking through a complex web of historical, cultural, and social circumstances. As agents of this critical, hermeneutical process, Catholic feminist theologians have shared a pivotal concern of feminism's 'third wave': the necessary nuancing of the category of women's experience.

Third-wave feminism underlines the fact that feminism's first and second waves were owing to the achievements of privileged European and Euro-American, white women. In response, it advances a more inclusive apprehension of women's experience that foregrounds the different experiences of women from diverse ethnicities and classes that are all invaluable standpoints from which to name and resolve the numerous types of discrimination against women that occur around the globe. As a result, African and African-

American, Asian and Asian-American, Latin American and Hispanic women, to give some examples, are telling their stories and claiming their personhood. They are voicing their identities and vibrantly enunciating their Christian faith and its growth within their specific cultural matrices (see Russell, Pui-lan, Díaz, and Cannon 1988). By sharing their histories with each other, they are working towards a more comprehensive Christian view of liberation that incorporates the wide variety of experiences had by women and men from multiple social and economic backgrounds. Today's third-wave feminist theologies suggest that liberation is a communal, relational event that can only occur when we commend and nurture diversified realizations of Christian discipleship born out of specific socio-cultural contexts. According to this outlook, Christ continues (p. 836) his work of redemption through the guidance of the Holy Spirit who enlivens Christian communities all over the world to labour for the freedom of the oppressed.

Hermeneutics, Language, and Praxis

As a result of Catholic feminist theology's dialogue between the tradition and the many shades of feminist discourse that make up feminism's second and third waves, it encompasses a myriad of viewpoints on various theological foci (i.e. creation, Christ, salvation, Trinity, anthropology, Church, and the sacraments) that are too numerous to detail in this brief outline. Therefore, this overview limits itself to the methodological concerns of hermeneutics, language, and praxis. Hermeneutics illuminates revelation by interpreting Scripture and tradition. Language communicates revelation through words, images, and symbols used to convey both the richness of the tradition and the wealth of humankind's experience within it. And, praxis is the faithful living in accord with revelation's truth through individual and communal practices that are affected by and that influence experiences and expressions of Christian faith. Hermeneutics, language, and praxis are each woven into the other so that hermeneutics and language have immediate implications for praxis, and praxis has automatic repercussions on hermeneutics and language. Keeping in mind that each methodological 'moment' implies the others, the following treatment will illustrate how they shape feminist theologies of scripture, Christian history, redemption, Mary and the saints, the Trinity, and creation. Though this essay showcases Catholic feminist theology and its contributions to these areas, it remembers that these would not have been possible without the equally formative achievements of feminist theologies arising from other Christian confessions and other religious traditions.

Scripture

In the area of hermeneutics, feminist theologians ask themselves how they are to interpret Scripture, how they are to investigate the stages of development within the theological tradition, how they are to use that tradition to make sense of their contemporary experience, and how their precise experiences of gendered embodiment within specific networks of historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic circumstances enlighten their appreciation and employment of the tradition. When it comes to how they

interpret Scripture, they begin by taking seriously the views expressed by the Second Vatican Council's 1965 *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum* (*DV*) concerning the right use of historical-critical methods for a genuine grasp of the scriptural author's context when communicating God's word:

(p. 837)

> For the correct understanding of what the sacred author wanted to assert, due attention must be paid to the customary and characteristic styles of feeling, speaking, and narrating which prevailed at the time of the sacred writer, and to the patterns men normally employed at that period and in their everyday dealings with each other
>
> (*DV* 12).

Feminist biblical scholars agree that it is essential to develop a historical consciousness of the 'patterns employed' in people's 'everyday dealings with each other' when the biblical texts were composed and heard by their respective audiences, and that this is to be done in light of the Bible's status as the inspired word of God. They point out that powerful socio-cultural forces were constantly affecting the biblical authors and their audiences, whether or not they were conscious of them. Thus, effective historical awareness entails situating the progression of scriptural ideas within their broader socio-cultural settings and within the later socio-cultural milieus where scriptural beliefs were adopted and practiced. Scripture in all of its socio-cultural complexity, from its genesis throughout its reception history, confronts contemporary people of faith who then speak back to the text from their present-day perspective (for a feminist Ricoeurian analysis of the relationship between reader and scriptural text see Schneiders 1999). Feminist biblical scholars partake in this hermeneutical circle of past and present when they voice that the historical settings in which the Scriptures took shape were patriarchal, and that this frequently led to the unfortunate absence of women's voices in the communication of God's word. Therefore, they assert that recognizing the historical contexts for scriptural formation and reception means admitting that the pervasiveness of man's subordination of woman heavily impacted how women were portrayed in the Bible and how and why later women were uninvolved in the public, authoritative reception of biblical faith.

It is because of this that feminist biblical exegetes study the Scriptures with a twofold hermeneutic of suspicion and remembrance: 'suspicion' in the sense of questioning the absence of women and the reasons behind it, and 'remembrance' in the sense of finding where women's presence has been scripturally preserved and of educating contemporary women with the lessons that their biblical ancestors can impart to them (see especially Schüssler Fiorenza 1992: 57–68). For example, the title of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's groundbreaking work, *In Memory of Her*, calls to mind the presence of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet at Bethany (Mark 14:3–9) (see Schüssler Fiorenza 1983). Though Jesus insists that she will be remembered, she is unnamed. Therefore, she stands as a symbol of all the forgotten women whom God remembers and whom contemporary women must never disregard; for, they knew Jesus, they followed him faithfully to the cross, they

saw him after he had risen, and thereafter they testified to his identity and ministered to others as coleaders with men in the community of disciples.

Feminist biblical scholars, such as Schüssler Fiorenza, dig deeply into Scripture's data to reconstruct the place of women's experience in the historical and socio-cultural contexts of the early Christian community. Giving present-day women a picture of the women of the early Church, they empower women to affirm their role as Christ's disciples who are devoted to ending all forms of domination that contradict the egalitarian (p. 838) nature of the Kingdom of God that Jesus inaugurated. Thus, hermeneutics is unavoidably related to praxis. It also galvanizes the language and imagery that indicates its findings. For instance, Schüssler Fiorenza's phrase, the 'discipleship of equals' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983: 97; 1993) denotes how the gospels and the Pauline epistles give evidence of a community of women and men who had followed Jesus, who had helped one another to discern the meaning of their experience of his death and resurrection, and who had shared leadership to oversee and fortify the early Christian community that faced increasingly difficult and rewarding challenges.

A feminist, critical, constructive biblical hermeneutics makes the bond between hermeneutics, language, and praxis quite clear, because its critical component that intensely questions and evaluates the historical, socio-cultural conditions responsible for unjust structures of domination is not an end in itself. The critical is paired with the constructive element that devises practical measures for commencing social change that will make the gospel message of salvation palpable in the experience of oppressed men, women, and children who need others to follow the Spirit's call to help set them free (Schüssler Fiorenza 2002: 87). Feminist scriptural theologians revive the Bible's world-transforming, redemptive outlook so that it will enliven a contemporary vision of the same hope for human flourishing.

Feminist biblical exegesis is mindful of the multivalent quality of women's experience. Therefore, it addresses women's subjugation by taking race and class into account, recognizing that those women who have benefited from the patriarchal system have also been complicit in their sisters' oppression. This admission gives rise to a more wide-ranging critique of domination in all its guises which, in turn, motivates women of all social, cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds to reclaim the Bible as God's word addressed to them. Today's women of Latin American base ecclesial communities - who endure the injustices of poverty, violence, and oppression - see themselves in the forgotten women of the Bible, and they see the enormity of their suffering mirrored back to them in the biblical Jesus whose suffering, death, and resurrection has set them free (see Clifford 2001: 165). When they read the Scriptures from the place of their pain and hardship, they find that the crucified one remembers them, and they are emboldened by their solidarity in Christ to partake in the liberating effects of his *Via Dolorosa*.

Women of colour from Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe implement their own blending of critical, constructive, biblical hermeneutics and grassroots, practical, scriptural witness that yields productive dialogue between contemporary women's

faith experiences and the New Testament's renderings of the Christ-event. The many socio-cultural locations of women across the globe direct their Spirit-prompted entrance into the biblical world where they welcome and enable God's yearning for a new creation that is free from every kind of domination and injustice. Every woman's innovative collaboration with divine agency's feats of human liberation is an irreplaceable part of the Spirit's sanctification of human beings and the world they inhabit.

(p. 839) Christian History

Feminist historical theologians research Christian history with the same double hermeneutic of suspicion and remembrance practised by their allies in biblical theology. By doing so, the work of scholars such as Kari Elisabeth Børresen and Caroline Walker Bynum, supports the dismantling of biased oppositions between men and women that originated in past patriarchal contexts and that must not continue into a post-patriarchal future. From them, we learn how to grapple with ancient and medieval male theologians' (i.e. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas) views on women, and to uncover the historical, socio-cultural stimuli that generated their patriarchal, dualistic perceptions of man versus woman, soul versus body, rationality versus affectivity, and spirituality versus nature (Børresen 1981). This unmasking of false dichotomies works towards the abolishment of hierarchical frameworks that elevate one aspect of human existence over another (i.e. soul over body). They have also led us into the thought worlds of medieval Christian women whose lives reflected the organic integration of body and soul as opposed to their unnatural polarization. With a profound respect for Christ's bodily suffering and its display of spiritual affection for humanity, these women engaged with the Eucharistic Jesus as mother who saved them, who ushered them into the Christian community through baptism in water and the Spirit, and who continued to nourish them with his Eucharistic presence (see Bynum 1982). This resurrection of previous women's experience from past historical periods bears further fruit in modern-day reflections that compare it with other kinds of women's experience.

Feminist theological interpretations of Scripture and tradition follow two interlocking premises: 1) a critical, constructive remembrance of women's past experiences obtains a more realistic impression of their complicated history, and 2) a trustworthy portrait of women's complex history incentivizes contemporary, socio-cultural conversion. This pair of theses relies on the basic back-and-forth movement between past and present—past clarifying present and present illuminating past—for the sake of opening up a new path into the future. Feminist systematic theologians also take these axioms for granted. Partnering with feminist biblical and historical theologians, they reflect on contemporary women's experience in the Church in light of how women were also living committed Christian lives in the past by giving flesh and blood to the beliefs contained in Scripture and tradition.

God-Language

The feminist systematician's critical, constructive engagement with the tradition has raised one of feminist theology's most fundamental and serious concerns: what language we should be using to name and call upon the God in whom we believe. Explored (p. 840) early on in Mary Daly's controversial *The Church and the Second Sex* (1968), the deficits of exclusively male God-language remained a pivotal point of discussion, as seen in the landmark works of Rosemary Radford Ruether (*Sexism and God-Talk,* 1983) and Elizabeth A. Johnson (*She Who Is*, 1992). Feminist theologians reason that by virtue of having been created in God's image, *both* women and men are capable of speaking about God in trustworthy and relevant ways. They facilitate dialogue between the words and images that women and men used in the past to express their religious understandings and the language that women and men use in the present to vocalize their knowledge of Christian belief. Once the conversation ensues, it becomes obvious that the words and images emerge within specific historical, socio-cultural frameworks and that they are enunciated and heard by different individuals in varied ways due to their divergent experiences of the images and of the realities to which they point. Given the fact that words can be spoken and heard variously depending on who is speaking and who is listening, productive communication cannot be limited to one word or to a solitary set of images that may successfully convey their meaning to some but not to others. For this reason, coupled with the mysteriousness of divine reality that no single word or image could touch, the Christian community composes a symphony of images and symbols that make sense when voiced and heard in unison (see also Protestant feminist theologian Sallie McFague 1982).

To illustrate this lesson, feminist theologians demonstrate how biblical images for God such as 'king' and 'judge' must be complemented by other scriptural images such as 'mother' and 'lady wisdom'. Women and men who speak and hear only the words 'king' and 'judge' for God, may or may not be able to use these words to relate to the God whom they are attempting to know and love. However, when these go hand in hand with other images such as 'mother' or 'lady wisdom', they are more likely to impart a fuller understanding that can reach numerous people. Perhaps even more importantly, their accompaniment corrects any misunderstandings of 'king' or 'judge' that would condone patriarchy, oppression, and abuse by presuming that God's being is akin to patriarchal forms of superiority and domination.

The coexistence of 'judge' and 'lady wisdom' also reinforces the analogical character of all theological language. Our speech gestures towards the God who, on the one hand, reveals God's self through the creatures God has made, and who, on the other hand, remains hidden due to God's ever-greater difference from human beings in their modes of thought and ways of life. Feminist theology does not violate the analogical principle by advocating the exclusive use of feminine imagery for God. However, it does inform us that if we choose to forget feminine imagery for God, we do so to the detriment of our ability to enter into God's mystery in a more honest and profound way (Johnson 1992: 115–120).

The simultaneous vocalization of male and female imagery for God is a more effective means of theological communication, because it collaborates with the Spirit who uses every aspect of graced humanity to assist human beings in glimpsing God's reality. This means seeing Jesus' identity and salvific mission from a variety of angles, viewing the roles of Mary and the saints from multiple perspectives, and witnessing the mystery (p. 841) of Triune life from a range of vantage points. Feminist theologians contribute to this panoply of views by retrieving and reconceiving many of the liberating and communally oriented images and symbols used throughout Christian history. What follows is a brief sampling of some of these feminist retrievals and reimaginings of the tradition's Christological, soteriological, mariological, hagiographical, and Trinitarian speculations.

Christ and Redemption

Feminist systematic theologians return to Scripture to speak anew the language of Jesus' salvific mission. From the gospels, they recover the Jesus who redeems humanity from sin by his death on the cross that is the efficacious culmination of a lifetime of redemptive activity including ministry to the poor, the sinners, and the socially marginalized. Jesus' every word and deed promoted human freedom from concrete situations of suffering, oppression, and abuse (Johnson 1992: 157–158). Feminist focus on the quality of Jesus' daily human activity sheds light on how the human is transformed through grace-filled participation in the Incarnation when Christ unites humanity to divinity. Human cooperation with the divine—humanity's reality and destiny because of having been created, redeemed, and sanctified by the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit—looks like the Christ of the gospels who gives sight to the blind and sets the captives free.

Feminist theology traces a dynamic continuity between the covenantal theology of the Hebrew Scriptures and the soteriology of the New Testament. God's salvific triumph in the cross of Christ that bespeaks God's solidarity with every innocent person who has ever suffered from social injustice, is consonant with the physical, spiritual, and social liberation offered in the Exodus event. The God of Jesus Christ is the same God of Israel that the prophets announce as the one who is devoted to the spiritual restoration of God's people and to concrete social conversion that annihilates injustice. The justice-seeking character of Jesus' human will and actions that are in union with the divine gives further descriptive language to the Christian belief in Christ's full divinity and full humanity that is the mystery of the Incarnation.

This feminist approach to soteriology is practiced extensively by African American, Hispanic, African, and Asian women when they bring their experiences of suffering and oppression, including sexism and racism, to the biblical Jesus and see resonances between their quests for justice and liberation, and the salvation that Jesus has achieved through his life, death, and resurrection. Redemption in Christ enables grace-filled imitations of Christ that promote justice in modern-day circumstances. For example, African-American womanist theologian Shawn M. Copeland, explains how Jesus' liberating life praxis shows that the salvation God offers encompasses liberation from all the injustices from which

persons need to be saved in order to live for Christ, including the social sins of sexism, racism, and classism (Copeland 2010: 124–125). These communal transgressions require God's redemptive grace to heal the oppressor and the oppressed, (p. 842) a salvific grace that is Christ's prerogative to bestow and that is his disciples' mission to receive and return to God by giving it to the world.

Latin-American feminist theologians, such as María Pilar Aquino, speak Christian faith anew through an exchange between Scripture's narration of Jesus' liberating words and actions, and contemporary women's stories of lives crying out for freedom from oppression and discrimination (Aquino 1993; Gebara 1988). This is owing to the Spirit who animated Scripture and tradition with a never-ending word, the same Spirit who rouses the interpreter to bring her daily experiences of the 'already' and 'not yet' dimensions of the Kingdom of God to bear on her brothers' and sisters' reception of that word. The inspired word kindles the fire of Christian discipleship, and feminist, biblically based soteriologies stoke the fire by energizing others to live their way into the Kingdom of God that began in Jesus, and that awaits its eschatological completion at Christ's second advent.

The language of faith spoken in the past by Scripture and tradition speaks again in the present through feminist sensitivity to contemporary needs and circumstances that necessitate original strategies for bringing the word to life. The feminist systematician initiates the conversation between past and present for the sake of the future by building on the work of feminist biblical and historical theologians. She recapitulates their questions. What did Jesus do? What did he say? How did he interact with women and members of other marginalized groups? How did early Christians respond to Jesus' egalitarian behaviour? She then adds her own questions to these. How do contemporary women of mixed socio-cultural, racial, and economic backgrounds come to Jesus? What do they see in Jesus when they meet him, and how does their encounter alter their thoughts and actions?

Mary and the Saints

Feminist theologians reflect on Mary and the saints in a comparable fashion (Johnson 1998; 2003). They posit plausible historical reconstructions of what it would have been like for this young, Jewish peasant woman to be ostracized and threatened because she was risking her life to carry out a controversial pregnancy. Alongside wondering what different women feel when they meet the maverick Jesus who sought the fellowship of women and other alienated persons, they now ask what it means for these women to meet the Mary who shared their same challenges of poverty and discrimination. These encounters with Mary are then used to fill in what is missing when Mary is only spoken of with such images as 'virgin' and 'queen of heaven'. This doctrinal language is not denied, but it is considered lacking if it is not spoken with a view to the concrete, historical location of this woman, Mary, who rose above her own circumstances of poverty and oppression when she actively responded to God with courage, wisdom, and strength. This is a woman whose virtue is exemplary because she knows the human struggle so intimately, especially when she suffers the persecution and death of her innocent son who (p. 843) cries out

for God's justice, not because she was untouched by the weight of life's turmoil and misfortunes.

A historically conscious view of the Mary who bravely partners with God to confront the injustices of poverty and oppression (Luke 1:46–55), prompts decisive engagement with certain kinds of theological anthropology that have their beginnings in Gen. 2–3 and the story of Adam and Eve. Feminist theologians concur with their sister biblical exegetes that a hermeneutic of suspicion should be used when assessing Eve's status as helpmate or as second to Adam. They conclude that the hierarchies of 'man as first and woman as second' or 'man as wielder of power and woman as submissive partner' are post-fall conceptions, and this opens up space to regard woman's character as resilient and responsibly active by not limiting her activity to the consumption of the forbidden fruit (Jewish feminist, biblical exegete Phyllis Trible set the stage for further feminist reflection on Gen. 2–3, see Trible 1979). Remembering Eve, feminist theologians find that the tradition's Marian title of 'Second Eve' carries with it the same hierarchical notions they have challenged by offering an alternative interpretation of Gen. 2–3. Eve's quintessential disobedience is countered by Mary's pure obedience. However, her rightful submission to God that has been given as woman's exemplar has often been dangerously extended to imply woman's equally proper obedience to man through the perfection of her self-sacrificial, passive nature (Børresen 1983; Ruether 1983).

Feminist criticisms of the gender essentialism (ascribing certain characteristics to the nature of man and others to the nature of woman) exhibited in such theologies of Mary as 'Second Eve,' call attention to the intricate relationship between nature and the social forces that help shape a person's gendered identity. A non-essentialist vision of Mary's role vis-a-vis men and women that considers the interplay of nature and socialization, produces a non-dualistic view of the sexes wherein both men and women who imitate Christ are seen as compassionate, nurturing, humble, and obedient. These qualities are first and foremost Christological attributes that human persons participate in more fully due to Christ's purification of them, so that humble submission to God could never be equated with an unhealthy obedience to unjust, humanly contrived power relations (Johnson 2003).

Feminist theologians debate the pros and cons of gender essentialism, eliciting relevant questions about the process of identity formation for men and women, and about the definition of womanhood in a postmodern milieu that postulates the self's fluidity and evolution rather than its solidity and predetermination. As explained earlier, for those who oppose gender essentialism, a person's identity is developed through the interchange between nature and socio-cultural conditioning. This perspective recasts the traditionally Marian/feminine qualities as virtues for all human persons undertaking spiritual formation in Christ. Thus, women are not stereotyped by cultural patterns of feminine passivity that leave them vulnerable to the abuses of patriarchy and subordination. Instead, they are one with Christ, freely choosing to enact a grace-filled, Christic life-form that is not imposed from the outside. In contradistinction, some who are in favour of gender essentialism accentuate identity's biological givenness and therefore posit woman's self-aware-

ness and fulfilment as originating in (p. 844) her God-gifted uniqueness that makes her necessarily different from her male counterpart (Schumacher 2004). In this vein, Mary stands as the model for motherhood, caregiving, peacemaking, and obedient servanthood, cooperating with Christ to give new life to the world.

For others who adhere to nature's potency while also discerning the weight of its socio-cultural construal, woman's 'motherly essence' must be rescued and reimagined as a model of the life-giving and life-nurturing power that can free men and women from their false notions of human power's sovereignty over life (see for example Beattie 2006: 273–277); Beattie converses with the insights of French feminists, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, and with those of Catholic theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar, to propose new understandings for the language of body, sex, and death. This take on woman's nature underscores Mary's motherhood that gives Christ's life to the world and that joins together with the crucified and risen Lord to give life to the Church. Her life-giving power sets women free to be full participants in Church life when they welcome their responsibility to reconceptualize the meaning of love and compassion when Mary unites them to Christ's motherly act of redemption. The three foregoing positions face third-wave feminism's reminder of the differences that contrasting cultural and ethnic experiences of motherhood and Marian devotion should make when evaluating gender essentialism and when presenting helpful mariologies designed to empower both women and men to be fully fledged, devoted members of Christ's body (Gebara and Bingemer 1987).

Similar concerns regarding theological conceptions of woman's character surface when feminist theologians, Mary Catherine Hilkert OP and Joann Wolski Conn, encourage women to examine the lives of two women Doctors of the Church: Catherine of Siena (1347–80) and Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–97) (Hilkert 2008; Conn 1996). Such explorations give rise to the following questions: What makes these women holy? Are there distinct signs of feminine holiness? What are the motivations for and the influences on the ways they and others have told their stories? In this case, as before, the same twofold hermeneutic of suspicion and remembrance practised by feminist biblical, historical, and systematic theologians comes into play. For example, a feminist appreciation of Catherine of Siena recollects her conviction that she was called to preach and to give Church leaders guidance in political affairs, though other reflections may refer briefly to these points because of their standard association with male Church ministry. As seen through a woman's eye, Thérèse of Lisieux's childlike simplicity of faith matures in her trials of God-forsakenness during her final illness. These meditations on women's sanctity open up routine presentations of women saints to include their historical words and deeds that would typically be markers of male sanctity. They also challenge the dualisms of public versus private and active versus passive (with Catherine of Siena's combinations of politics and mysticism, contemplation and action), as well as presence versus absence (with Thérèse of Lisieux's mature faith in a God both hidden and revealed). Feminist considerations of sainthood offer resources for broadening the Christian community's estimation of female sanctity beyond fixed ideas of what it means to be a holy woman, paying attention to the varying demonstrations of women's holiness in mixed socio-cultural contexts.

(p. 845) The mutually interpretive encounter between past and present experience is always operative during the feminist exposition and application of Scripture and the tradition when it comes to theologies of Christ, salvation, Mary, and the saints. God's perpetual presence with the community of women and men who constitute the Body of Christ gives credence to these experientially guided exegetical efforts. Thanks to the Spirit's constant gift of divine presence, contemporary experience is imbued with divine activity that points back to God's past actions that are memorialized in Scripture and tradition. The experiences of all believers around the globe are charged with the Spirit who prescribes that women and men should collaborate to speak faith's language, and who therefore proscribes the marginalizing of either women's or men's experience.

Trinity

Feminist Trinitarian theologies often begin with the theological presupposition of God's lasting presence to the world that God has made and redeemed through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. As Scripture and the tradition testify, human beings have knowledge of God, because God reveals God's self to them through God's actions in history that culminate in the transcendent God made most immanently present in the event of the Incarnation. For example, Catherine Mowry LaCugna's *God for Us* (1991), contends that since human understanding of God begins with the economy of salvation, that narrative should always have primary significance when we are giving language to the unity of God's being and action. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection made the unity of the persons of Father, Son, and Spirit manifest and led theologians to speculate further about who the eternal God is in God's self in order for God to be who God has been for us.

Starting with God's relationship to the world through salvation in Christ, feminist Trinitarian theologians then proceed to the instances in the tradition where divine personhood is understood in terms of intra-divine relations. The Triune God of persons in communion reveals the divine intention for human personhood, because God has created human beings in the Trinity's image. Humanly devised power structures that privilege some and pass over others do not bear any correspondence to the mystery of the three-in-one and so mar the imprint of the divine mystery on human relationships. The Saviour whose Incarnation unites humanity and divinity in his person reveals that human personhood is not based on individual superiority over others. Rather, it resides in the dance of mutuality between persons who are distinct yet united through the bonds of communion that were established at creation and that are salvifically recreated in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The language of human persons in communion cultivates the unifying praxis of Gal. 3:27–28 that eradicates divisions based on gender, race, and class that have heretofore stunted human growth toward authentic personhood.

(p. 846) Creation

Human relations also merit feminist theology's urgent response because their breakdown equally threatens the wholesome unity of God's entire creation (Ruether 1992; Hinsdale 1991). Keenly aware of the earth in crisis, ecofeminist theology deems polarities between human beings and the rest of God's creation to be just as dangerous as unjust hierarchies between men and women, because they treat the earth's precious inhabitants and resources as instruments to be manipulated for the prioritizing of industrialization and technology. Ecofeminists concentrate on community building that discourages the separation of humanity from the creation that sustains it, for human persons in relationship are part of the overarching harmony of the earth's ecosystems that relies on the preservation of a delicate balance between every component of terrestrial life (Clifford 1995).

Theological consciousness of this symbiosis alluded to in Genesis 1 and encouraged by conversation with natural science, compels us to partner with the earth as stewards. This means returning to a communal foundation for human agency that implies the joining together of nature and spirit. To that end, Catholic feminist theologians remember how the Church's liturgical celebrations incorporate elements of the earth's life-giving abundance (i.e. the waters of baptism, the bread and wine that become the body and blood of Christ, and the chrism oil) to be signs of God's presence that renews creation's sacramental blessedness. Christian worship's avowal of creation's treasured place in God's plan, confirmed by Christ's elevation of nature to communion with supernature, urges human beings to abandon their depletion of the earth's natural resources in favour of sowing and cultivating practices of conservation and regeneration.

Conclusion

This presentation of some Catholic feminist theologies has focused on their interlacing of hermeneutics, language, and praxis. Interpretations of Scripture and tradition spark a conversation between the diverse, socio-culturally influenced religious experiences of Christianity's past and the mixture of socio-culturally influenced religious experiences of Christianity's present in order to glean wisdom from the tradition for individual and communal transformation that anticipates the Kingdom's eschatological fulfilment. Likewise, creative feminist utterances of theological remembrance and expectation in the areas of Scripture, tradition, redemption, Mary and the saints, the Trinity, and creation are all comprised of meetings between past and present experiences that call forth the best Christian practices of living in communion with God, one another, and the world. Creative feminist theology calls for remembrance of the early Church's forgotten women who exemplified Christian (p. 847) discipleship in their Christ-like combination of authority and service, and looks forward to new paradigms of female leadership in the Church. It remembers medieval women mystics who experienced Christ's eucharistic motherhood, and looks forward to a continued conversation between the tradition's masculine and feminine God-language. It remembers Christ's union of divine and human that manifests the human share in God's longing for justice, and looks forward to our further imitation of

Christ's justice; and it remembers Mary and women saints by their concrete actions in particular socio-historical moments, and looks forward to unconventional models of female sanctity that are not unlike their brother saints. It remembers God's relationship to the world through creation, redemption, and sanctification that reveals divine persons in relation, and looks forward to our becoming more like persons in communion who bear the Trinity's image. And finally, creative feminist theology remembers the lessons of liturgical worship that teach us the sacramentality of creation, and looks forward to our common stewardship of the earth's treasures. In every case, close study of Scripture and tradition discovers the inescapable bond between faith-filled thought and action, and inspires a contemporary marriage between Christian belief and praxis that rejuvenates the theological enterprise. Catholic feminist theologies stress the unbreakable connection between hermeneutics, language, and praxis in order to harness the transformative power of right speech and belief to develop practices of justice, peace, and equality that further the graced communion between men, women, and the earth that God intends and achieves through the economy of salvation.

Feminist theologians' performances of the threefold tasks of interpreting, communicating, and practising Christian faith relate back to their fundamental assertions that: 1) the Holy Spirit guides human beings to receive, understand, give language to, and live in accord with revelation's truth; and 2) their fulfilment of these tasks is directly influenced by their experiences of gender, ethnicity, and class. Humanity's cooperation with the Spirit depends on collapsing unjust barriers between genders, races, and classes that have produced socio-cultural practices that affect our interpretation and communication of Christian faith in unwholesome ways. Feminist theology's task begins with identifying such patterns of community-dissolving behaviour that get in the way of genuine interpretation, profession, and embodiment of the gospel's world-transforming message of justice and salvation. And, it moves forward by offering alternative models of community-building lifestyles that are in continuity with the most brilliant forms of Christian discipleship that the tradition has to offer. In so doing, this contemporary theological movement will continue to raise challenging questions in all areas of theological inquiry that help to break down the remaining boundaries preventing the full human flourishing of all men and women. No matter which set of pressing issues feminist theologians confront, they will provide contemporary Catholic theology with the much-needed world views of present-day women whose manifold experiences are one of the essential elements for the Spirit-motivated human praise of divine mystery.

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Catholic Theology and Heidegger

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Abstract and Keywords

This essay considers Catholic responses to Heidegger under three headings: rejection, warm acceptance, and critical appropriation. Erich Przywara and Alasdair MacIntyre reject Heidegger; Bernhard Welte and Jean-Luc Marion accept; Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner take Heidegger to be a worthy, if flawed, conversation partner. The extent to which a given theologian reads Heidegger as possibly in conversation with or as simply opposed to Thomist metaphysics functions as a guide to different attitudes of engagement with Heidegger. The more a Catholic warms to Thomas the cooler they become towards Heidegger. The essay ends by suggesting a continued engagement with Heidegger because doing so has stimulated Catholic consideration of the nature of revelation and the openness of the finite toward the infinite.

Keywords: Heidegger, metaphysics, Thomism, MacIntyre, Przywara, Marion, Balthasar, Rahner, Welte

MARTIN Heidegger (1889–1976) could justifiably claim the rank of the twentieth century's most famous former Catholic, or most famously former Catholic. No matter how lively the debate over what he became afterwards—Protestant, atheist, pagan, mystic of *Sein* (or *Seyn*), or phenomenologist of the inapparent—Heidegger's heritage alone provides reason enough to open the question of how he stands with respect to Catholic theology. But our concern in this chapter will be Heidegger's most celebrated and lamented contribution to philosophy: his (re)opening of the question of being.

For Catholic theology, particularly since Thomas Aquinas, the question of being brings us into close proximity or even contact with the question of God. When Heidegger denounces precisely this move—the alignment of the questions of being and God, or ontotheology—as the fatal flaw of the metaphysical tradition (Heidegger 2002a), from Plato through Nietzsche and all points in between, he directs a provocation straight at Catholic theology. This and Heidegger's other main ideas address themselves to the overall scope of thinking. Catholicism, whose very name means 'according to the whole', cannot ignore thinkers interested in overall scope. We shall see that, indeed, Catholic theologians (and

theologically interested philosophers) have surely not ignored Heidegger, but have presented a rich array of responses to his thinking.

This essay aims, if only *in nuce*, to give the reader a sense of the spectrum of Catholic responses to Heidegger by presenting the positions of six influential Catholic figures, grouped into three categories: rejection, warm acceptance, and critical appropriation. The first two categories represent the extremes of Catholic dispositions vis-à-vis Heidegger. Since, to this author's mind, Heidegger merits appropriation in Catholic theology, yet also demands incisive criticism, the mediating position appears last in this essay. Erich Przywara and Alasdair MacIntyre stand in for the attitude of rejection. We move next to the other end of the pendulum's swing, with Bernhard Welte and Jean-Luc Marion's different manners of warmly accepting Heidegger as an ally for Catholic theology. From here, we consult Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner as exemplary (p. 851) Catholic theologians who take Heidegger to be a worthy, if flawed, conversation partner, and thus recommend a critical acceptance of his works. (The author begs charitable receptivity to his selectivity. He has based it on the relative influence of each chosen figure on either English-speaking theology or Heidegger scholarship, or both. A more comprehensive chapter could surely have included Alfred Delp, Johann Baptist Lotz, Gustav Siewerth, Johann Baptist Metz, Otto Muck, and Alphonse de Waehlens, and possibly Ignacio Ellacuría and other philosophically inclined liberationists). The conclusion identifies two points on which to critique Heidegger, and gives two reasons why contemporary Catholic theology must risk accepting him as a resource. Today's Catholic theologians should treat Heidegger carefully because of his potential dangers, but should take him seriously because of his possible fruits—not least that Heidegger verges on discovering Catholicism's constitutive ethos.

Rejection

Matthias Jung observes that Catholicism's reaction to Heidegger was formed from the beginning by a commitment to the *philosophia perennis* (Jung 2003: 479), the tradition from Plato through Hegel that has Thomas Aquinas as its figurehead. Rejections of Heidegger by Catholic thinkers have been shaped accordingly, from the 1930s through the present, by the judgement that Heidegger makes a fundamental, erroneous, and toxic rupture with the *philosophia perennis*.

Erich Przywara's (1889–1972) resistance to Heidegger shows up not long after Heidegger rises to philosophical prominence in Germany. Przywara peppers many of his writings with this resistance. A thinker famous for his readings of Thomas Aquinas and John Henry Newman, Przywara was also engaged with the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler. Though Przywara holds these two in high esteem, they, along with Heidegger, strike him as philosophy's endgame, due to the distance each takes from God, beginning with Husserl's bracketing of God in the *epoche*.

As early as a 1928 review of *Being and Time* (1927), Przywara was critical of Heidegger's exacerbation of Husserl's philosophy of consciousness into a metaphysics of existence (Przywara 1928: 252ff.). This critical stance continues in Przywara's 1961 review essay, 'Husserl et Heidegger', where he observes that Heidegger brings 'German philosophy… to a terminal stage', wherein it resembles a secularized eschatology (O'Meara 2002: 131–132). In Przywara's own words, Heidegger's 'eschatology [*eschatologisme*] is essentially interior to the world, in the world, deriving from an overlaying of a prophetic [Friedrich] Hölderlin onto [Georg] Trakl's world in ruin' (Przywara 1961: 62). Indeed Heidegger does something like this, particularly in his *Contributions to Philosophy* (Heidegger 1999), a work that Przywara would not have known, but whose upshot Przywara gleans from Heidegger's other works. Heidegger's varied announcements regarding the West's crossing over to 'the other beginning' via the *Ereignis* (event of being) in *Contributions* or in his elucidations of the poets Hölderlin and Trakl (see Heidegger (p. 852) 2000a, 1971, 1982), all of which cohere with his critique of Western metaphysics as ontotheology, cannot be taken otherwise than as eschatological statements.

Przywara's problem with Heidegger's 'secularized eschatology' first presents itself much earlier, in *Kant heute* (1930). While considering Heidegger's *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1997), Przywara notes that metaphysics in general and critical metaphysics in particular must pose and answer the question of the 'first' and 'last'—of the bounds, or *eschata* of thinking. For Heidegger's 'critical metaphysics of finitude', the 'last' is the 'nothing' (*das 'Nichts'*), and thinking comes down to articulating the 'godliness of the self-identity of the productive nothing (*die Göttlichkeit der Selbstidentität des produktiven Nichts*)' (Przywara 1930: 97–98). For Heidegger, the nothing is the first and the last, the source of everything, including a thinking, acting, and feeling nothing called *Dasein*.

The problem is, first, that Heidegger does not argue for the nothing as the 'last' of thinking, but he stipulates it. Second, Heidegger thus leaves himself unable to deal with central philosophical questions, among them the problem of identity. His thinking amounts to a tautology: nothing produces nothing by nothing-ing. Heidegger's eschatology of the nothing also keeps him from being able to treat anything such as the theology of creation (of course, Heidegger explicitly proscribes philosophical involvement in discussions of creation: Heidegger 2000b: 8). Przywara proposes as a counter-eschatology 'the self-identity of God even in God's self-communication (*die Selbst-Identität Gottes auch in seinem Sich-Mitteilen*)' (Przywara 1930: 104). This view of the 'last' of metaphysics, which Przywara develops in the line of the *philosophia perennis* as thematized in Thomas Aquinas, allows for a multilayered concept of identity—analogy, not tautology—and an openness of philosophy to theology, especially a theology of creation. Heidegger's whole narrative of the dawning of a new beginning in thinking after metaphysics turns on the idea of openness, but Przywara contends that the *eschata* of Heidegger's thought prove to be closures, not openings.

Heidegger worries Przywara not so much because his philosophy is flawed, but because Heidegger wins over Catholic enthusiasts. The 1941 review essay 'Neuer Thomismus' critiques a 'Catholic Heidegger school', a group of Jesuits who studied with Heidegger at

Freiburg in the mid-1930s (Rahner among them), and subsequently either directly and favourably commented on Heidegger in theology, or implicitly folded Heidegger into their theological projects (Przywara 1941: 301). Heidegger seduces these men into abandoning 'analogy', the view of being that holds a tension between Creator and creatures and which is normative for Catholic theology (Przywara 1941: 303). These theologians and philosophers collapse being into a univocity, resembling both theopanism and pantheism (see Przywara 1930: 91–92), that confounds the distinction between God and creatures. Przywara deems this confusion tantamount to an exit from Catholicism. Thomas Aquinas, not Heidegger, should be followed. The former exercises an analogical thinking open to the sovereign transcendence of God and the hope for human transcendence in redemption and sanctification. The latter's tautological thinking closes itself against them.

(p. 853) Alasdair MacIntyre (1929–), in his more recent rejections of Heidegger, substantially agrees with Przywara's interpretation of the Catholicism-Heidegger encounter. Interestingly enough, MacIntyre most clearly expresses his antipathy to Heidegger in his book on Edith Stein, the German scholar, Catholic convert, and victim of Auschwitz, Przywara's friend and close interlocutor who became more suspicious of Heidegger as she got closer to Przywara.

MacIntyre regards Heidegger and Stein as thinkers of an initially similar profile (both were, at the same time, assistants to Husserl) who subsequently travelled in sharply divergent directions, the former resolutely away from the Catholic Church towards atheism, and the latter away from atheism courageously towards the Church (MacIntyre 2006: 164). This movement vis-à-vis the Church transpired in each as a result of his or her negative or positive relationship to Thomistic ontology (MacIntyre 2006: 6).

This represents only half of MacIntyre's point in contrasting Heidegger and Stein. The latter developed elective affinities with Thomas because she came to find that her life as a whole made sense in light of Thomas's overall view of being, which encompasses and sets in order finite and eternal being. Not only Stein's 'academic' work, but also her political action and everyday living cohered with a Thomistic approach to things. The key here is the holism that leads Stein towards Thomas and Catholicism. On the other side, 'bifurcation' marks Heidegger's life, due to a 'mythology' that Heidegger himself worked to construct and that has been bolstered by Heidegger scholars ever since (MacIntyre 2006: 5). This 'mythology' holds that Heidegger's 'private' philosophical development and his public life, including most notably his time as a Nazi, are isolable from each other. Heidegger's attempts at self-exculpation thus leave his thinking open to the charge of being confused on the relationship that must exist between philosophy and everyday (including political) life. This results from a bad ontology.

How? MacIntyre leaves the answer to this question somewhat between the lines of his text, but his critique makes sense. Heidegger claims to develop his thinking of being from *Being and Time* forward from concrete existence, particularly pre-objective states such as moods; nevertheless, he must argue for the distance between his thinking of being and his own concrete political action in order to legitimate that very thinking. Heidegger's

placement of himself beyond the philosophical tradition to which Thomists belong, for the stated reason that this tradition cannot treat adequately concrete reality, results in *him* being unable to treat concrete reality.

Should he have been more consistent, the more comprehensive, and cohesive Heidegger would look something like the one Hans Jonas criticized in 'Heidegger and Theology' (1964), where the history of being as a project of fate serves as an analogue to the rise of the 'Führer' (Jonas 1964: 218ff.), or like the Heidegger of the Nazi exposés of Victor Farías (1989) and Emmanuel Faye (2009). MacIntyre implies agreement with such readings of Heidegger, and in doing so, adds a political element to the philosophical-theological-ontological rejection of Heidegger in Przywara. Again, as in Przywara's critique of Heidegger's secularized eschatology, MacIntyre finds that the main problem with Heidegger's thinking is an overall structural one: though it pretends to openness (to the concrete), it ends in closure—violent, racist politics.

(p. 854) Warm Acceptance

We move on to two figures who welcome Heidegger with open arms (perhaps *too* open arms) as a fructifying conversation partner for Catholic theology. Neither person views Heidegger as a thoroughly unproblematic figure. Bernhard Welte (1906–1983) in particular, who knew Heidegger personally and who even gave the eulogy at Heidegger's funeral, most surely is not oblivious to Heidegger's atheism and his time as a member of the Nazi party. Even with Heidegger's problems, his thinking leads somewhere, and not necessarily to where he takes it—this is the conviction of Welte and Jean-Luc Marion (1946–).

Welte has quite rightly gained a strong following in Germany and, notably, in Spanish-speaking scholarship, but he remains relatively little known among English-speaking scholars (but for Godzieba 1994). He is best known for his correspondence with Heidegger (Heidegger and Welte 2003). In addition to the letters he exchanged with Heidegger, Welte's thinking is indelibly stamped with Heidegger's influence. He devotes a number of essays to Heidegger, in which he advocates strongly for a 'following thinking with (*folgende Mitdenken*)' Heidegger in order to find out what he truly says (Welte 2007: 118). Only with such *Mitdenken* can any deep questions be put to Heidegger's work and move towards anything like an answer. Heidegger agrees; in a letter he approved of Welte's reading of God in his thought (see Welte 1982: 85).

Welte's positive theological esteem for Heidegger stems from at least three convictions: 1) Heidegger's discussions of being and the nothing show them to abide in an 'atmosphere of the holy' (Welte 2007: 117–118); 2) Heidegger perceptively characterizes late modernity as a time of 'withdrawn divinity', and he presents Catholic theologians with the timely task of 'thinking in the wake of traces of withdrawn divinity' (Welte 1982: 98); and, on a related note, 3) Heidegger's view of the 'default of God' readily lends a hand to a theology of human life as 'seeking' and 'crying out' to God (Welte 1982: 93–94). Welte arrives at these convictions through the very *Mitdenken* with Heidegger he recommends. Indeed, Welte shows a remarkable appreciation for the breadth of Heidegger's writings

that is patently absent in Heidegger's critics (Przywara and MacIntyre included). From *Being and Time* through 'What is Metaphysics?', to the Nietzsche- and Hölderlin-interpretations to *Gelassenheit* and *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (both 1959), Welte accompanies Heidegger on his path, trying to figure out what he means to say.

Though much could be explored regarding the Welte-Heidegger *Mitdenken*, we must focus on one essay from 1966, 'Thomas Aquinas and Heidegger's Thought on the History of Being' (Welte 2007: 139–155). After describing in detail Heidegger's view of metaphysics as ontotheological (metaphysics forgets the being of beings, assigning beingness [*Seiendheit*] the highest place) and thus in need of being overcome, Welte attempts to answer the questions of whether Thomas's metaphysics fits Heidegger's definition, and whether Thomas offers anything towards the overcoming of metaphysics (Welte 2007: 145). To Welte, a large portion of Thomas's metaphysics appears straightforwardly metaphysical/ontotheological according to Heidegger's guidelines for diagnosis. Thomas mainly thinks of beings (*Seiende*) and beingness (*Seiendheit*), not of (p. 855) being (*Sein*). But in a statement from Thomas's *Summa theologica*, Welte finds Thomas on the verge of overcoming metaphysics. Thomas writes, '*Deus non est in aliquo genere* (God does not fall under any genus)'. This means that 'God is in no way a being', or that 'God " 'is" not' (Welte 2007: 149–150). In this way, Thomas finds a peculiar place for himself both within and beyond metaphysics. His history of effects illustrates this. He gives rise to later traditions of conceptual and representational thinking (for example, late Scholasticism, Leibniz, and Wolff) that are decidedly metaphysical, but also to a non-conceptual thinking of silence and the nothing that opens beyond the regime of being and beingness, as in Meister Eckhart (Welte 2007: 152–154).

Regardless of the accuracy of Welte's reading of Thomas, Welte shows us a prime example of a Catholic thinker who takes Heidegger to be normative for reading the philosophical-theological tradition, and thus vindicates only the element of that tradition, embodied in Thomas and Eckhart, of which Heidegger would approve. For Welte, Thomas gets no time or space to push back against Heidegger. Rather, Thomas finds lasting value insofar as he might be pressed into serving Heidegger's project of *Überwindung der Metaphysik*.

While Welte may be the most enthusiastic Catholic appropriator of Heidegger, Jean-Luc Marion stands as perhaps the most familiar to English speakers. Apart from John Caputo, he might take sole credit for a resurgence of interest in Heidegger's thought among Catholics from the early 1990s onwards, following the English translation of Marion's *Dieu sans l'etre* (*God without Being,* Marion 1991). A devout Catholic and an avowed phenomenologist, Marion aims to meet Heidegger's challenges to Catholic theology while enlisting Heidegger as a luminary for Catholic theology's future.

Marion's Catholic acceptance of Heidegger begins very early, with *The Idol and Distance* (1977), a book whose content resembles Welte's acceptance of the Heideggerian narrative of ontotheology. Marion believes that metaphysics has seduced Catholic theology into giving up its primary commitment: expounding God's loving self-revelation. Catholic theology, by assigning to God the name 'being' (foremost in Thomas and later Thomisms),

transforms God into a concept, accessible through human ‘proof’, ultimately sapping God’s own life and freedom, and greasing the wheels for God’s death in late modern metaphysics (Marion 2001:12). Like Welte, who upholds Thomas and Eckhart as exceptions to Heidegger’s rule in the service of a non-metaphysical theology, Marion vindicates elements of Nietzsche (a liminal figure for Heidegger) and Hölderlin (non-metaphysical for Heidegger) on the way to placing Dionysius the Areopagite (‘Denys’) entirely outside the sway of metaphysics (Marion 2001: 73–78, 131–136, 139–195, and throughout). The vindicating factor for each thinker lies in his non-conceptual thinking and language—Nietzsche’s aphorisms, Hölderlin’s poetry, and Denys’s praise—which facilitates the preservation of ‘distance’, or presents God’s withdrawal from ‘being‘. Should Catholic theology wish to recover a sense of God’s living self-revelation and not lend credence to philosophical proclamations of God’s death, it must proscribe ‘being’ as a name for God.

God without Being (1982) makes clear the extent to which Marion draws theological cues from Heidegger. Starting from Heidegger’s remark that should he write a theology, the (p. 856) word ‘being’ would not occur in it, Marion augments *The Idol and Distance*’s position with a more insistent and trenchant critique of Thomas’s ‘conceptual idolatry’ (Marion 1991: vi, 32–33). Thomas faced a choice: either theology could be a science, with ‘*ens*’ as its first principle, ‘and man’s point of view normative’; or theology could ‘renounce any status as a conceptual “science” ’, and submit *ens*/being ‘to a “destruction” by the doctrine of divine names’ drawn from Scripture and *not* philosophy (Marion 1991: 81). Though Thomas opted for neither, his indecision exposed later Catholic discourse to assuming the former choice as primary, and thus to being subsumed to metaphysics and sharing in its demise. Marion looks again to Denys as a truly *theo*-logical theologian who avoids the allure of being a stand-in for God, and who points to a Catholic theology that favours a logic of love (see Marion 1991: 183–197). By *God without Being*’s end, Marion all but throws up a wall of separation between faith and reason, with the former championing charity (adequately apprehending the God whose name is Love) and the latter clinging to being (which is in principle barred from accessing God, who is beyond being). Even though Marion voices serious reservations with Heidegger’s reduction of theology to an ontic science thoroughly subordinate to philosophy (see Marion 1991: 68ff.), *God without Being*’s overall perspective still plays on a Heideggerian field, albeit a reversed one, where theology gains primacy.

Marion later attempts to soften his (borderline fideistic) theological positions. Perhaps he finds that reason, deployed phenomenologically, can make great headway towards discovering things that, according to *The Idol and Distance* and *God without Being*, should remain inaccessible to it. In ‘Thomas Aquinas and Onto-theo-logy’ (2003), Marion aims to rehabilitate Thomas by insisting that his view of *ens* and *esse*, on further review, evades the critique of ontotheology. Thus Marion places Heidegger under more suspicion than in *God without Being*, but one must still note that Heidegger’s critical perspective still saturates Marion’s text: Thomas evades the narrative of ontotheology only insofar as his doctrine of being converges with Denys’s articulation of the good beyond being.

One of Marion's most recent books—on theology—assumes as its central task to discuss the ineluctable unity of faith and reason. *Le croire pour le voir* (2010), a set of occasional essays, centres on Christian responsibility to *logos,* just as much as to *theos*. Marion keeps the emphasis on love that characterized *God without Being,* rendering love as '*la "grande raison" de l'amour*' (Marion 2010: 25ff.) but this is no longer a love that sets sail away from reason. Instead, this love is reason that has reached its full capacity. Marion cites Thomas in support of his idea (*De potentia* 7.5.ad14; Marion 2010: 21). Here as elsewhere, Catholic warmth towards Thomas cools a scholar's Heideggerian impulse, and thereby yields a more capacious view of reason.

Critical Acceptance

Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988) and Karl Rahner (1904–1984) recognize from the start that the importance of Heidegger for Catholic theology resides not so much in (p. 857) his immediate commensurability with Catholic thinking as in his ability to exercise it. Insofar as Balthasar and Rahner have profoundly shaped English-speaking Catholic theology, Heidegger's influence—if markedly inflected—suffuses it.

A consensus has grown recently among Balthasar admirers that his thought consists in a thoroughgoing rejection of Heidegger that resembles Przywara's. A closer examination of Balthasar's works tells another story. In prior decades, commentators regarded Balthasar's trilogy (*Glory of the Lord, Theo-Drama, Theo-Logic*) as a prime example of non-correlational theology. In reality, this trilogy is the grandest work of correlational theology of the twentieth century. The word of God has two prime correlates: Hegel and Heidegger. Appropriately, we shall discuss the latter.

The first panel of Balthasar's triptych, *Glory of the Lord*, offers the clearest examples of Balthasar's choice of Heidegger as a prime interlocutor. The enterprise of the whole work—tracing the theme of God's glory through Scripture and theological, philosophical, and literary traditions—serves in large part to respond to Heidegger, whose view of being is inseparable from his idea of truth as *aletheia,* translated as *Unverborgenheit* (unconcealment). For Heidegger, the metaphysical tradition erred throughout history because it lost a sense of *aletheia*, truth as phanic, shining, or lighting up, opting instead for truth as *apophansis,* or shining cloaked in propositions (see Heidegger 1962: 261–265, 171, 256–257). Balthasar begins his theological trilogy by discussing at length how the glory of God—theo*phany*—(something, for him, equivalent to the truth of being) has been experienced throughout history. A chief component of Balthasar's presentation on God's glory consists in a well-wrought critical defence of the metaphysical tradition (*Glory of the Lord 4* and *5*), in opposition to Heidegger's dismissal of all of it except for Hölderlin and Eckhart. The point is that Balthasar takes Heidegger seriously enough to respond to him at length and in depth.

Balthasar praises Heidegger's project as 'the most fertile one from the point of view of a potential philosophy of glory' precisely because Heidegger 'keeps the process of his thought firmly fixed on… the mystery of the immanent distinction between Being and the

existent' (Balthasar 1991: 449). Heidegger's writings on the 'ontological difference' (between being and beings—see Heidegger 2002a), which he aims to guard against the veiling the metaphysical tradition foisted on it, signify for Balthasar a modern opening towards the 'transcendental analogy of being between God and the world'. Unfortunately, Heidegger prematurely foreclosed what he opened (Balthasar 1991: 449). Thus Balthasar commends Heidegger's attention to a philosophical prolegomenon to a central theological distinction. Balthasar combines this with a Przywarian rejection of Heidegger for not pursuing his philosophy far enough. Heidegger's downfall comes when he refuses firmly to answer the question of God (Balthasar 1991: 450).

Like the other Catholic respondents to Heidegger, Balthasar measures Heidegger's value for Catholic theology against Thomas. Balthasar contends:

> More than anyone else, Thomas Aquinas is in harmony with Heidegger, with whom he shares the insight into the transcendence of being and into the fundamental distinction between being and existent, which is fundamental for all thought, even (p. 858) though their respective understandings of the nature of this distinction diverge from the first point on
>
> (Balthasar 1991: 434).

Heidegger and Aquinas converge, then, and significantly. The problem, Balthasar recognizes, consists in Heidegger's willful ignorance of the Thomistic figuration of the distinction between being and existent as a 'sign of creatureliness' that makes sense only if one refers it back to God's 'power of creation' (Balthasar 1991: 448, 622–623). In foreclosing the question of the Creator, and of human *Dasein* as creature, Heidegger closes a circle in which being depends just as much on the existent for its expression as the existent depends on being for its existence (Balthasar, 1991: 621, 643). In doing so, Heidegger closes a possibility that Thomas leaves open—that glory might be a philosophical category, used to describe the utter freedom of being as it holds sway over existents. Though Heidegger converges with Thomas by highlighting the 'ontological difference', he would have done well not to diverge from Thomas's specific view of it.

Convergence in divergence, or divergence in convergence, describes well not only Heidegger's relation to Thomas, but also to Karl Rahner. Rahner has already gained mention earlier as a former student of Heidegger's at Freiburg. Rahner quite freely refers to Heidegger as his teacher, and an inspiring one at that. He specifies, though, that Heidegger teaches him not content (determinate ideas), but how to read texts and traditions. A thorough examination of Rahner's writings supports his claim, even when he appears to borrow rather straightforwardly from Heidegger.

The main example of this ostensible direct borrowing lies in Rahner's *Vorgriff*. The term itself comes from Heidegger's *Being and Time* §32. The *Vorgriff*, along with *Vorhabe* and *Vorsicht,* stands as an intuitive, preconceptual sense for (or orientation in) the world that keeps *Dasein* from being overwhelmed by the task of getting along in the world. The *Vorgriff* is a feeling of rootedness, being at home in the world, being able to interpret and

cope with it. Rahner retains these connotations of *Vorgriff* when he employs it. Rahner takes with utmost seriousness the fact that human persons live in the world and, in a sense, find themselves at home here. However, Rahner adds the important element that the *Vorgriff* incorporates the movement of spirit—that is, human spirit impelled by the Holy Spirit (or grace). Whereas for Heidegger the *Vorgriff* indicates the unadulterated finitude of human being in the world (read Heidegger 1962: §§12–13 alongside §32), for Rahner the *Vorgriff* is the primary site for human finitude's elevation towards God's infinitude (i.e., *Dasein*'s reach within the world beyond the world—see Rahner 1968: 186–187).

The case of the *Vorgriff* should suggest that Rahner engages with Heidegger in a more indirect manner than the other thinkers treated earlier. But for a very early article on Heidegger's existential philosophy (Rahner 1969) and some stray comments on Heidegger in writings such as *Hearer of the Word* (1941), Rahner rarely names Heidegger, and would not have admitted to having read much of Heidegger's work from the early 1940s onwards. Unlike our other thinkers, Rahner does not weigh in on Heidegger's (p. 859) narrative of the ontotheological constitution of metaphysics. In fact, Rahner is unabashedly ontotheological; like Thomas, he treats God as absolute being.

But Rahner and Heidegger share a central concern, and the former may have learned this concern from the latter: the need to explore what one might call the incomprehensible sustaining ground of human life. For Rahner, this sustaining ground is God, the holy Mystery who abides in the 'absolute proximity of self-communication' while always remaining inconceivable, ungraspable, and unable to be mastered (Rahner 1966: 61ff.). For Heidegger, this sustaining ground is being, to which he assigns numerous relatively adequate names, settling at times on 'the holy', which, Heidegger affirms, can be named 'quietly' only (see Heidegger 2000a: 215). Rahner and Heidegger wish to honour God and being, respectively, with reverent silence while also venturing still to use language to express human beings' sustaining ground as it has come to light in theology, philosophy, and poetry.

There are a couple of key differences between Rahner and Heidegger, though, even as they evidence seemingly congruent pursuits. First, Rahner seems to notice, like Przywara and Balthasar, that Heidegger's exclusive focus on finitude obscures what the *philosophia perennis* rightly considered as constitutive of being: infinity. Thus, while Rahner shares Heidegger's interest in the incomprehensibility of being, that is, its elusion of human concepts (see Marion), Rahner follows Thomas in holding that being's incomprehensibility is consequent on its infinitude. In other words, because God is infinite, God can give God's self infinitely to a finite (human) apprehender, thus overwhelming this apprehension and remaining incomprehensible. For Heidegger, being eludes human comprehension by way of withdrawal (Heidegger 2008b: 374ff.), not through the advance of self-communication.

Second, Rahner's account of the sustaining ground of human life involves generosity. It is true that this sustaining ground (being/God) is, perhaps, best honoured by silence, but through silence this ground is *encountered;* the ground offers a share of life to its apprehender, which culminates in the beatific vision (Rahner 1983: 253–254). Heidegger's be-

ing seems uninterested in such encounter—being is callous, even edged with malice. For this reason, the way of thinking being that Heidegger unveils in his lectures on Schelling (Rahner attended these), which ascribes to the sustaining ground an 'indifference' to good and evil, to benignity and malice, reveals Heidegger's fundamental commitments (Heidegger 1985: 118–124, 156–158). He devotes himself to being, which abandons *Dasein* to struggle, strife, and ultimately death—nothing more. This brings us back to Heidegger's 'eschatology', or the latter's positing of 'the nothing' as the 'first' and 'last' of his thinking. Rahner, even when he echoes Heidegger rather overtly, fundamentally opposes Heidegger's eschatology when he accepts the perennial Catholic doctrine of the beatific vision—a vision that comes *fully*—which can never be reconciled with the Heideggerian event of being that never comes.

Balthasar and Rahner show that Heidegger's thinking, though fruitful, cannot be assimilated without serious inflection into Catholic theology. This should be the overarching message taken from the present essay.

(p. 860) Suggestions for Appropriation

Our rapid jaunt through Catholic appropriations of Heidegger offers two points of critique and two reasons for acceptance. We begin with the critiques. First, Heidegger holds to an apriorism of finitude. He stipulates a priori that philosophical thinking concerns finitude only (see Heidegger 1997: 17), without ever deigning to defend this position. Though Heidegger might assist Catholic theology in avoiding temptations to excess (i.e., a blurring of the finite and the infinite) coming out of German idealism, Przywara, Rahner, and others indicate that Catholic theology cannot bracket the question of the infinite without relinquishing a coherent doctrine of God. Second, Heidegger evidences what one might call prodigality towards evil. Heidegger has attracted many (including Welte and Marion) with his discourse of 'letting' (*Gelassenheit*), which he opposes to metaphysics' forgetting of being due to its obsession with conceptual control of beings. However, we saw earlier that in the Schelling lectures (this is just one example), Heidegger's 'letting' lets evil just as much as good. On this count we can unite MacIntyre's political critique of Heidegger, and Balthasar and Rahner's more theoretical critiques. It at the very least makes sense that Heidegger would 'let' the thoroughly this-worldly 'glory' of Nazism sway him, since good and evil—in their callous strife—enjoy a deeply ambivalent parity. This *Gelassenheit* has no place in Catholic theology.

If these points give us pause, Heidegger's potential for continued contributions in Catholic theology should encourage us to keep reading him. Two reasons demand recognition here. First, Heidegger has renewed several thinkers' interest in the theology of revelation. Balthasar's thick retrieval of the theme of glory and Rahner and Marion's inquiries into God's incomprehensibility derive largely from Heidegger's prompting. These themes merit further investigation, as does another: Heidegger's conviction that we must reckon truth primarily as disclosure (alethic) rather than correctness (apophantic) offers

much food for thought regarding God's self-showing (theophanic). For example, how might Heidegger's account of truth fructify a Catholic theology of scriptural inspiration?

Second, Heidegger might assist Catholic theologians in unveiling the fundamental ethos of Catholicism—openness to finding God in all things. Several references were made above to Heidegger's thematics of opening, and our authors' (often implied) contentions that Heidegger's view of being and/as finitude defaults on its promise of openness. Heidegger touches on, even if he shrinks back from and fails properly to articulate something like a Catholic view of transcendence when he rejects metaphysics' affinity for control and closure. He wishes to open thinking to its proper—wide—aperture. This is what lies behind his opening of the question of being, of human *Dasein* as concerned with being. For this reason he takes interest in the incomprehensible and the ineffable, meditation, and poetry. Heidegger's positive effect in this regard can be glimpsed in Rahner, who ventures to combine Heidegger's antipathy to metaphysical closure with Thomas's (and Ignatius of Loyola's) audacious search to find the openness of the finite (p. 861) towards the infinite. If Heidegger admits of such a transposition, and to this author's mind he does, then by virtue of his desire for openness, Heidegger never fully leaves his native Catholicism behind. Welte and Caputo would surely have it this way, and they may be right (see Caputo 1993: 341).

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THE Theology of the Body

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter outlines and defends the theology of the body that has been developed following the famous series of Wednesday catecheses offered by Pope St John Paul II. The chapter emphasizes three themes at the heart of the Theology of the Body. First, a vision, following Gaudium et Spes 22 that places Christ and the Incarnation at the core of the interpretation of humanity and society. Second, a vision of the human body that makes it possible to describe human existence in the light of love and to recover the theological significance of the notion of 'experience'. Third, a corresponding anthropology of love that offers the key to the Christian vision of God, humanity, and the world; this anthropology of love is centred in the family relationships, as the privileged place where God reveals himself.

Keywords: body, incarnation, family, John Paul II, anthropology, experience

THE Incarnation of the Son of God, centre of the Christian faith, makes the body a crucial area of interest for Catholic theology, a *theological locus* in its own right (for a longer version of the arguments offered here see Granados 2009). The most important articles of the Creed are related to human corporeality: the becoming flesh of the Word, the redemptive suffering of Christ, the resurrection of the body, the Eucharist, the understanding of the Church as Christ's Body. It is thus not surprising that there can be a 'theology of the Body', which studies corporeality under the light of God's salvific plan. This theology—essential to approach the Christian mysteries—has been present in different forms along the tradition of the Church. Modernity, however, with the rupture it introduced between humanity's body and soul (a process Georges Bernanos called 'the Incarnation in reverse' (Bernanos 1947: 167)) occasioned a special need for an explicit theological reflection on the body. Thus, the theology of the body appears both as an answer to the cultural situation and as a presentation of the core of Christianity.

This context helps us appreciate the importance of the *Catecheses on Human Love in the Divine Plan*, also known as the '*Theology of the Body*', delivered by John Paul II between 1979 and 1984 (for the text see John Paul II 2006). The late pope elaborated on a tradi-

tional topic, timely presenting it again to the consideration of the people of God. This chapter studies the main elements of John Paul II's proposal, in the context of a comprehensive Christian theology of the body. It also reviews some of the criticism raised concerning this '*Theology of the Body*', and opens up some perspectives for the future.

What is the *Theology of the Body*?

John Paul II's *Catecheses* expresses his desire to promote a Christian vision of the family in the context of the effects of the sexual revolution, but they do so by addressing the deeper problems that underlie these cultural changes, problems that have to do with the (p. 864) overall understanding of the human being. John Paul II's interest in the *Theology of the Body* was not limited to the beginning of his pontificate, but was rather a project he always pursued, as is visible in other documents, such as *Familiaris consortio, Evangelium vitae*, and the *Letter to Families* (*Gratissimum sane*). An interesting example of this continued concern is the book of poems *Roman Triptych*, one of the last books he wrote, in which he returns to topics developed in the Wednesday catecheses (see Larrú 2009).

Three factors are crucial to John Paul II's thought: a) a renewed theological vision, central to the Second Vatican Council, that places Christ and the Incarnation at the core of the interpretation of humanity and society (see *GS* 22); b) a vision of the human body that makes it possible to describe human existence in the light of love and to recover the theological significance of the notion of 'experience' and; c) a correspondent anthropology of love that offers the key to the Christian vision of God, humanity, and the world; this anthropology of love is centred in the family relationships, as the privileged place where God reveals himself. Let us consider each of these three in turn.

The Centrality of Christ's Revelation

The *Catecheses* on *Human Love in the Divine Plan* are theological texts, inspired by Christian revelation. They deal with the meaning of human love in the divine plan and with the sacrament of marriage. Thus, an analysis of the biblical texts offers the departure point for the pope's reflections (he refers mainly to Genesis, the Gospels, and the Epistles of Paul, but he also includes references to the Prophets, the Wisdom tradition, the Song of Songs, the Book of Tobit, and the Gospel and Epistles of John).

GS 22 is crucial for John Paul II's teaching: 'Christ, the last Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear'. This sentence provides for John Paul II the key to interpret the Second Vatican Council. It is from the mystery of Christ, who has assumed human life in all its depth, that dialogue with the world becomes possible and fruitful. In Christ, because of the Incarnation, it is possible for the Church to place herself in the midst of the world, without abandoning her commitment to her Lord; it is possible, as well, to elevate the world towards God, not by denying its reality, but by bringing it to fulfilment.

What is the new interpretation of the human person that appears in light of Christ's mystery? The human being is seen now in the light of love, the love of the Father that surrounds each person from the beginning of existence and calls him or her to communion with God and with the rest of the human family. Being based on the Incarnation and life of Christ, this vision of humanity gives pride of place to the body as the realm where God's love, his mystery, becomes manifest. To grasp the relevance of the body for this approach, suffice it to think of any of the Christian mysteries: the Incarnation, the Resurrection of the Body, the Eucharist, or the Church as the Body of Christ. An anthropological vision that starts from Christ has at its centre an understanding of the person as someone loved by the Father and called to love in return, and it reveals the centrality of the body in the carrying forward of this call to love.

(p. 865) We should conclude that the *Theology of the Body* is an exploration of the way these three dimensions interrelate: a) Christ's revelation of himself and the Father's love; b) the meaning of the body in light of the Incarnation; and c) love as the key to the understanding of God, the human being, and the world. This connection allows us to point out a crucial methodological point: the circularity between the revelation of Christ's love and human experience. The connecting point that allows John Paul II to articulate human experience and divine revelation is the understanding of love and the body as areas in which the two (revelation and experience) come together. We have, on the one hand, the revelation of Christ, who, in his Incarnation, shows us the path of love; and on the other hand, the analysis of human experience, in which the encounter of love, made possible through humanity's corporeality, takes on crucial importance. This circularity is such that each of the poles is related from within itself towards the other. On the one hand, the experience of love is open towards the coming of God's revelation; the analysis of love is crucial for the presentation of Christianity, for love is this point in human experience in which the divine makes itself present and manifest. On the other hand, only the revelation of Christ shows us the final horizon and primordial origin of humanity's call to love.

We will now analyse these two dimensions disclosed by the revelation of Christ to the human person: the importance of the body and the centrality of love.

A *Theology of the Body*

The body has become important in contemporary reflection precisely as a way to rethink the vision of humanity and to break the isolation proper to modern individualism. Reflection on the body is seen as crucial in the new cultural situation, to understand not only the private life of the individuals, but the very building up of society. Some authors develop a vision of the body as plastic material for man to shape (Giddens 1992). Such an understanding of the body could serve the project of modernity towards a democratic understanding of human life that fully gives form even to the private sphere of individuals. Other thinkers, such as M. Foucault, see the body as a social construct, as a way in which society exerts power over the individual (Foucault 1976–84). Inasmuch as the body reveals

the sexual difference of man and woman, the study of the body is linked to the concerns raised by the sexual revolution.

Why did the body become so important and what is the right way of understanding it as part of humanity's identity? The topic of the body as a philosophical and theological theme acquired importance during the second half of the twentieth century. Whereas the phenomenology of Husserl and the existentialism of Heidegger paved the way for the appearance of this reflection, both philosophers failed to develop its whole richness (see Ricoeur 1992: ch. 10). In their wake, thinkers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Gabriel Marcel, Emanuel Lévinas, and Hans Jonas, issued a rich philosophical reflection on the body (see Marcel 1940; Merleau-Ponty 1945; Jonas 2001. It is worth noting that Merleau-Ponty's work is a continuation of Husserl's thought, and Hans Jonas's is a response to his teacher Heidegger).

(p. 866) Merleau-Ponty makes the body the centre of his 'Phenomenology of Perception', by describing corporeality as humanity's form of having a world. Lévinas, who accepts Merleau-Ponty's analysis, sees in the body the place where the presence of alterity, of the Other, is revealed to consciousness. The disciple of Heidegger, Hans Jonas, for his part insists also on the body as the point that allows one to overcome modern dualism, by being the point of connection between man and his environment; Jonas's disciples have continued his reflections, especially in studying the link between medicine and philosophy (eg. Spicker 1970). Finally, Gabriel Marcel connected reflection of the body with a philosophy of the family. Humanity's incarnate condition, for Marcel, is deeply connected to each human being's belonging to a family, by which one's identity is constituted (Marcel 1963).

John Paul II's contribution was to present the body in its connection with love, a viewpoint from which both reflection on the body and reflection on love came out enriched. The body, being at the same time objective and subjective, belonging both to the external world and to each human being's interiority, makes possible human beings' presence to and participation in the world. At the same time, the body opens up humanity's life to the encounter with other persons and towards the horizon of transcendence. The great question that each human being 'is' for himself (St Augustine, *Conf.* 2.10.18), if placed concretely in the body, that is, by taking into account that each human being is an incarnate being, becomes answerable only in terms of relationship with the world, others, and God. Reflection on the body helps us see that love is not an accidental ingredient of man's life, but an intrinsic part of his constitution.

Concretely, this presence of the human person in the world opens up towards the two dimensions in which John Paul II develops his anthropology: human beings' relationship to God (called by John Paul II *original solitude*) and the relationship between man and woman that gives birth to the family (*original unity*, in John Paul II's language). In and through the body, John Paul II develops an anthropology of love, that is, a vision of humanity intrinsically constituted by love (human and divine) (see John Paul II 2013 – originally published in 1963). Let us focus now on this important point.

An Anthropology of Love

The main title of John Paul II's *Catecheses* is not *The Theology of the Body*, but *Human Love in the Divine Plan*. This fact reveals that the centre and focus of the catecheses is not the body in itself, but the truth of human love and its sacramental way of imaging the divine. It is because it is intrinsic to this truth of love, in which John Paul II sees the way to fulfilment for the human being, that the body is of crucial interest.

As we said, the body reveals humanity's participation in the world and, by doing so, defines the person as a being constituted by relationality. The *Theology of the Body* insists that this corporeal relationality is, from the beginning of each human being's journey in life, the way in which one opens one's self to transcendence and thus relates to God.

John Paul II refers to this fundamental coordinate of humanity's experience as *original solitude*, in connection with God's statement in Genesis: 'It is not good for man to be alone' (Gen. 2:18). This solitude before God is, then, from the beginning, a matter of relationship with Him, both as the Creator and as the fulfilment of human aspirations. The fact that this transcendence is rooted in the body is crucial to understand the form God's presence takes in human life. (p. 867)

The possibility of God appearing as a Giver, and not as an oppressive Master who always demands too much from humanity, is opened up by God's connection with a decisive experience in human life: the encounter of love between man and woman. Adam's encounter with Eve, read not only as a past event, but as an elementary human experience, allows John Paul II to develop this point. What the pope calls *original unity*—that is, the fact that in the human body (in its masculinity and femininity) love is revealed as the final constitution of man's being, is to be connected with *original solitude* (humanity's relationship to God); for it is this encounter between Adam and Eve that finally reveals the face of God as a Father, who has entrusted Eve to Adam and vice versa. In the gift of Eve, in fact, God is infinitely overcoming his previous bestowals upon Adam, entrusting him with a being who, like Adam, is called to transcend this world.

This means that the possibility of the body revealing God is linked, for John Paul II, with its possibility of revealing the other person in his or her infinite dignity. It is in the bodily encounter of love between man and woman that God reveals Himself to humanity as a Father, as the loving origin and destiny of the human journey.

The birth of a child is the seal of unity between Adam and Eve (who, in the child, are forever one flesh) and the final proof of God's presence in their love (cf. Gen. 4:1: 'I have conceived a child with the help of the Lord'). The fecundity of the union witnesses in a singular way to God's presence in the love of the couple, and to the ultimate divine mystery manifested in their union.

At this point, the *Theology of the Body* needs to become a Theology of the Family, according to what John Paul II calls the 'genealogy of the person' (*Gratissimum sane* 9). God's revelation takes place not only in the relationship between Adam and Eve, but in all of the

family relationships that followed from theirs. The way of love that the person is called to walk can be described in three steps: accepting one's being as a child, who proceeds ultimately from the Father (*original solitude*); being able to give oneself as a spouse, rooted in the love received from the Father (*original unity*); and, finally, becoming a father or mother, with the fecundity that comes from the union. The fact that all these relationships are inscribed in the body allows us to speak of a triple meaning of the body: filial (the body reveals to the human person that he is a child); spousal (the body tells him that he is called to give himself as a spouse); and procreative (or paternal/maternal: the body attests to the human being's capacity to become a father or a mother) (cf. Benedict XVI 2011).

The Christological perspective of this is present, even if not always explicitly, in John Paul II's vision. Christ is the Son of the Father who gives himself up for the Church, his Spouse, in order to generate the new life of the Christians. The history of Christ's life in the flesh, as a history of filiation, spousality, and paternity, becomes the pattern that explains in fullness the way of humanity and brings the human family to communion with the Father.

(p. 868) In this brief description we cannot elaborate on other elements developed in the *Theology of the Body*. We limit ourselves briefly to mention two of them of singular importance. The first one is concupiscence, an effect of humanity's refusal to accept God's logic of love; because of concupiscence, the body loses the clarity and transparency of its language of gift, substituting it for a logic of domination and possession (Granados 2012: ch. 3). The second is the eschatological perspective John Paul II gives to his *Catecheses* by including the topic of the resurrection of the body and connecting it with the virginal state of life.

As is clear from this presentation of John Paul II's thought, a theology of the body is not concerned only with the topic of sexuality (see Granados 2006). It includes many other areas, which are only developed in a small part by the pope in his *Catecheses*. Some of these are addressed in other writings, such as, for example, the issue of 'work' in *Laborem exercens* or the 'suffering body' in *Salvifici doloris*. The implications of the *Theology of the Body* apply transversely to all of theology. As an example we can think of the theology of the liturgy, of ecclesiology or sacramentology, as areas that could profit from this vision of the body (Lacoste 2004; Chauvet 2001). Having summarized the vision of John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*, we will now examine some of the objections raised against it.

Points of Discussion and Perspectives for the Future

The *Theology of the Body* constitutes one of the main heritages of John Paul II's pontificate. Prompted by the cultural crisis of the sexual revolution, and written in support of *Humanae Vitae*, his analysis develops a solid anthropology of love. Scholars have not

failed to acknowledge the importance of the proposal and its theological potential for the future of the Church and society (for a bibliography see Mitchell 2003. See also Weigel 1999; Kerr 2007: 176).

I have divided my comments in this section of the chapter into four sections. The first one regards its rootedness in tradition; the second, its method; the third, the anthropological consequences of the *Theology of the Body* in the frame of a theology of love; the fourth deals with the capacity of this approach to explain the Christian vision of God, humanity and the world.

On the Sources of the *Theology of the Body*

Sometimes the *Theology of the Body* is presented as John Paul II's radical innovation, an innovation that does not have roots in the tradition of the Church. According to (p. 869) this view, the vision of Christianity regarding the body and sexuality has been negative throughout history, in part because of the influence of an Augustinian pessimism that regarded the sexual act as sinful unless done with the intention of having children, and valued celibacy as the only real Christian call (cf. Brown 1988:160–189; 387–427; Pinckaers 1967). However, a careful study of the sources shows that the positive vision of John Paul II on sexuality is firmly rooted in tradition. The interest in the body is present in Christianity from its beginning, due to its very foundations in the Incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Old Testament, as the backdrop against which Jesus' message is to be interpreted, also provides a very positive vision of human corporeality. In this light the Church Fathers promoted a vision of the human person based on the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus, which shed new light on their understanding of humanity. It is true that during some periods of the Church, and due to influences alien to Christianity (for example, a disembodied reading of Platonism), the importance of the body has not been taken enough into consideration. Moreover, we must not forget that the vision of the body itself has to reflect the forces of concupiscence: there is also a connection in the body with sin and death that justifies some suspicion in its regard.

However, the response to the Church to phenomena such as Gnosticism or Manichaeism are concrete proof of the importance Christianity has always bestowed on the human body. Marriage has always been defended as a good and a sacrament of Christ's love for the Church; virginity has appeared not as a depreciation of the body, but as a way of honouring it, in connection with the Incarnation and life of Christ. Recent studies highlight the positive treatment of the body in key Fathers and Doctors of the Church: Irenaeus, Augustine, Maximus the Confessor, Thomas Aquinas, and others (see Orbe 1969; Miles 1979; Henry 2000; Cooper 2005; McAleer 2005; Bynum 1987, 1992, 1995). It would be wrong to say, then, that the *Theology of the Body* is a wholly new vision that has appeared only in thetwentieth century (see also Cooper 2008; Ashley 1995; Chenu 1974). Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, for example, all affirm that the '*imago Dei*' is also present in the human body, since it has been fashioned by God so as to prefigure the Incarnation of Jesus (Granados 2012: 32; Navascués 2005).

This continuity does not mean, however, that there is no novelty in the way John Paul II's has approached the topic of the body and sexuality. The *Theology of the Body* has undertaken a vision of the body that takes as its point of departure, not the way God has formed the body, but the analysis of human experience. By adopting this viewpoint John Paul II has been able to see the body, not only as the original gift from the Creator, but also as the person's openness to others and to the world, an openness that is structured according to the sexual difference. This new approach allows for a deeper understanding of the meaning of being 'male' or 'female', as well as of the importance of filial and generative relationships for the constitution of the human person. In this way, the *Theology of the Body* overcomes the suspicion that (p. 870) some witness of the Christian tradition has developed regarding the sexual condition of the human person.

On Method: Circularity between Revelation and Experience

It has been said that John Paul II's line of argument in his *Theology of the Body* does not follow the path of natural law (which had been customary in theological arguments against contraception), but is based on a commentary of biblical texts and revelation (Kerr 2007; Curran 2005: 178).

It is true that John Paul II develops an approach based not only on natural law but also on Christian revelation, thus providing a larger context for his presentation. This framework serves better to highlight the connection between love and procreation, understood as an intrinsic element of love's truth, and as a token that reveals God's presence within the union of love. This reasoning, however, does not mean a break with natural law doctrine, as if the latter were no longer necessary. Quite to the contrary, John Paul II bases his method in a correlation between human experience (thus including in itself natural law arguments) and Christian revelation (some have critiqued John Paul II's argument precisely on account of his appeal to experience, see Roberts 2007: 181). Both are connected because both are interpreted in terms of the (corporeal) encounter of love, as we have explained earlier. On the one hand, human experience finds its summit in *love, revealed* in the *body*; on the other hand, divine *revelation* shows us the fullness of God's *love* in Christ's *bodily* life, death, and resurrection.

Of course, from this viewpoint, the defence of natural law takes another perspective, for it is made from the viewpoint of the acting person (with its focus on experience), and not from a mere naturalistic one (see *Veritatis splendor* 78) and is connected with the meaning inscribed in the body and its language (see *Veritatis splendor* 48). But this is indeed the approach taken by the genuine Catholic tradition.

The method developed by John Paul II in his *Catecheses* is the one indicated in *Fides et ratio* 73, which explains the circularity between faith and reason, while the *Catecheses* prefer to speak from a phenomenological perspective of a circular link between human experience and divine revelation. It is important to note that John Paul II, in talking of experience, avoids the risk of subjectivism, for his point of departure is the experience of love, which implies an openness to otherness and towards transcendence. In this perspec-

tive the body plays a crucial role as the place of encounter with the world, others, and God. Divine revelation, on the other hand, is understood not as a mere communication of knowledge, but as the personal revelation of love's fullness in Christ's body (cf. 1 John 4:9–12; 16), and is thus not alien to human experience, but intimately connected with it.

(p. 871) Anthropological Significance of the *Theology of the Body*

Let us now consider the criticisms referring to the anthropological significance of the *Theology of the Body*, especially regarding moral theology and the understanding of the family. The merit of John Paul II's contribution has been acknowledged; the pope offers a deep and renewed reflection on the meaning of sexuality and human love based on a personalistic perspective. Many argue, however, that he develops his theology of the body in too narrow a frame.

First, some see in the pope's approach an excessive focus on the gift of self that neglects other dimensions of sexuality such as its beauty, passion, and spontaneity (Curran 2005: 170). It is true that the idea of gift of self can lead to oversimplifications when it is read in a merely moralistic sense, as if it were the result of a voluntaristic desire to forget oneself and sacrifice oneself for others. For John Paul II, however, the gift of self does not come out of the sole self-determination of the subject, but is rooted in a previous acceptance of oneself from the hands of God, mediated by others (one's parents, in the first place). This means that the gift of self to an other always recognizes the previous goodness of one's identity, inasmuch as received from another. Self-dominion, as a consequence, is not just a stoic virtue of self-control, but is rooted in humanity's receptivity: one possesses himself when he has received himself from the hands of another. It is the reception of the gift, and the gratitude that comes from it, that moves us to love in our turn. This answer of love is in fact the only way to keep the gift alive: one possesses himself only inasmuch as he gives himself out to others. It is only in this context that a true spontaneity can be obtained: not the spontaneity of 'anything goes', but the spontaneity of the artist who is able to express beauty, which the Christian tradition has associated with the concept of virtue (see Johnson 2001).

Secondly, a more radical objection is that the *Theology of the Body* has a flawed understanding of sexual complementarity and its significance for Christian life. John Paul II's emphasis leads allegedly to the conclusion that men and women who are not married are not complete and lack something about their humanity (see Curran 2005 168). But the way John Paul II reads sexual complementarity does not support such an inference. Each Christian vocation develops in the body, is connected with corporeality, and takes into account the person's concrete sexuality. What is common to all walks of life is the vocation (the call) to love, and the pattern of filiation, spousality, and parenthood (the pattern of the family) inscribed in our bodies. It is, then, crucial to all human beings that love has to be received (inasmuch as we are sons and daughters), be given up (inasmuch as we become spouses), and become fruitful (in parenthood). This pattern is shared by marriage and virginity, and does not exclude anyone from the common vocation to love. Virginity, let us insist, is for John Paul II not a denial of bodiliness, but a participation in the fullness

that Christ himself, virgin and son of a virgin, brought to the body by his Incarnation, bodily death, and bodily Resurrection.

(p. 872) Some have accepted the notion of complementarity, but have redefined it by distinguishing its different levels: heterogenital, reproductive, communional, affective, and parental, to which an 'orientation complementarity' is added in order to include homosexuality in the picture. Heterogenital complementarity is considered, then, relevant only for some people. The argument, however, does not take into account that the body is—already in its physical aspect—the primordial connection between the person and the world, as John Paul II argues in his *Theology of the Body*. An essential element of my own being, and of my gift to the other person, is this bodiliness I have not created, and that witnesses to my coming from another. Not to integrate genital complementarity is to leave out an essential element of experience, preventing human experience from attaining its wholeness and truth.

This criticism suggests two important areas in which the *Theology of the Body* needs to be further developed. The first refers to the connection between the body and nature, and to how the natural dynamism of the body is integrated in the human action as a necessary part of it. Biology, in the human being, is never mere biology. In this sense, the structures of nature convey a meaning that needs to be taken into account if we are to understand the possibility of a love that embraces the wholeness of experience.

The second should deal with the meaning of sexual difference between man and woman, in order better to clarify the features of masculinity and femininity. The problem is only hinted at in the *Theology of the Body* and deserves more study. In any event, in John Paul II's vision, complementarity is not to be seen as the relationship of two halves that, when put together, constitute the whole (theories of polarity, in Prudence Allen's terminology—see Allen 2006). Thus, stereotypes of the understanding of masculinity and femininity, such as, for example, in terms of activity and passivity, are to be avoided. In fact, John Paul II conceives of the union as an encounter of two solitudes that refer towards God and only in him find fulfilment. This means, first of all, that the two persons remain a whole in their union (Prudence Allen speaks in this regard of integral complementarity), but also that both are open towards transcendence. Masculinity and femininity represent two incarnations of the same original solitude before God and, in this sense, two ways in which the divine becomes present in the world. This openness of complementarity towards transcendence allows us to understand its fulfilment in consecrated virginity.

Finally, it has also been said that John Paul II has too narrow a vision of bodiliness, as if the body referred only to the sexual body. This concern is indeed a valid one. However, one can argue that John Paul II was already aware of this limitation of his *Catecheses*. He did not want to offer a complete *Theology of the Body*, but limited his reflections to marriage and family. At one point of his *Catecheses* he notes, for example, that a theology of suffering would need to be developed as an essential part of theological reflection on the body (Granados 2006). What is essential here is not how much ground the *Catecheses* covered, but the greatness of the horizon they open up.

(p. 873) On the Theology of the Body as a Window onto the Whole of Theology

Other studies have seen the papal text as an occasion to develop a complete theological synthesis. The *Theology of the Body* becomes a way to interpret the whole of Christianity, taking as its point of departure the assumption of the flesh by the Son of God. The most basic approach for such a synthesis is the development of the intuition expressed by Tertullian: *caro salutis est cardo* (the flesh is the hinge of salvation) (see e.g. Gesché 2004). The body—body of Christ, body of the Church, body of the Eucharist—is in the New Testament the place where God has revealed himself: it is the place of the manifestation of God as love. From the point of view of this connection between body and love, proper, both to human experience and divine revelation, one could offer a presentation of the different aspects of Christian faith.

The link between the body and love allows us also to introduce, in the context of a theology of the body, the nuptial perspective (Scola 2005). The possibility of developing a *Theology of the Body* is rooted in the writings of the Church Fathers. Understood, first of all, as a theology that places at its centre the connection between the body and love, branches of the tradition such as the one represented by Irenaeus of Lyons and Tertullian—centred in the *salus carnis*, the salvation of the flesh—offer a solid background. The nuptial image was used by these Fathers to express the union between the Spirit (as God's love) and the flesh, a union in which they saw a summary of the history of salvation (see Granados 2007). In the development of this nuptial perspective it is important to mention as well the writings of Origen.

In any event, if it is to offer the key for an entire theological synthesis, the focus on nuptiality is to be broadened to embrace the whole path of the family, thus including the entire set of family relationships: parents and children, husband and wife, brothers and sisters … In other words, the characterization of this theology as nuptial must not forget that nuptiality is first of all rooted in filiation and open towards a relationship with God, present in the love between man and woman (see Scola 2007). Only in this way does Scripture offer a solid ground to build up this synthesis, both in the Old and New Testaments, where family relationships appear as a key image to read the covenant between God and humanity. Only in this way can a proper analogy of love be developed, an analogy that recognizes the differences between filial, nuptial, and paternal or maternal love.

Suffice what we have said to evaluate the cultural and theological potential of John Paul II's *Catecheses*. When one studies the causes that led to the sexual revolution, one sees how deep the roots are. Thus, the response, which is to be approached from different fields, needs to address the foundational anthropological problems. In this light one sees that the development of a *Theology of the Body* is now a necessity for the Church, as well as an opportunity to present the core of her message, centred on the Incarnation and the Resurrection of the Body. Once more, in her effort to defend herself and the Gospel, the Church has the means, not only to respond to the critics, (p. 874) but also to make these responses a greater presentation of the beauty of the truth from which she lives.

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Asian Theology

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter examines the character of Catholic theology in the Asian context. It argues that Asian theologies rely on the fundamental principles of universal Christian theology even though, in their reflections on these principles in the light of their lived experience, they arrive at conclusions that are unique but not contradictory to universal theology. The chapter proceeds by examining six fundamental principles shared by Asian theologies: God is actively present in all his creation; pluralistic diversity necessarily demands a dialogical existence; the lived reality of harmony is an essential Asian theological concept; theology occurs in and through lived contexts; the kingdom preached by Jesus is wider than the visible Church; and theology needs to bring total, integral human liberation.

Keywords: Asia, theology, liberation, contextual, mission, harmony

ALTHOUGH born in Asia, Christianity in its current predominant form arrived in Asia with Western missionaries (who were often hand in glove with European colonizers). As a result, even today, Christianity, which is a tiny minority religion, is looked at with suspicion, as an ‘alien’ religion in many parts of Asia. This has been a perennial preoccupation for Church leaders as well as theologians throughout Church history. Hence there have been many sporadic efforts down the ages to see Christian faith through Asian eyes. Efforts to Asianize the Gospel message by people such as Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) in China, Roberto di Nobili (1577–1656) in India, and Joseph Vaz (1651–1711) and Jacome Gonsalves (1676–1742) in Sri Lanka, are only a few examples of those who have achieved some publicity, but there have been many such efforts all over Asia. As such, if theology is the perception of faith in Jesus of the Gospels within a particular context, then a contextual Asian theology is not a recent phenomenon though it is only now that it is being taken note of outside Asia.

Asia is not only geographically the largest continent, but it also holds nearly two thirds of world’s population. Consequently, Asia is a complex mosaic of diverse peoples, their cultures, and religions. In this sense, it is simplistic to talk of a single Asian theology (for the diversity of Asian theologies see England et al. 2002). Dalit theology of India, Minjung

theology of Korea, the many forms of indigenous and feminist theologies spanning Asia, make it difficult to speak of one Asian theology. Of course, some writers have pointed out that in spite of many diversities, there is an overall cultural unity that brings Asia together especially when one contrasts it with Euro-America or Africa (see Amaladoss 2008). This chapter attempts to highlight a few common characteristics of diverse Asian-Catholic theologies (in a realistic sense), and to use those characteristics to talk of an 'Asian theology' (in a speculative sense). We will extensively use the theology of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) documents as our paradigm for this purpose.

(p. 878) A Few Fundamental Asian Theological Conclusions

Asian theologies rely on the fundamental principles of universal Christian theology though in their reflections on these principles in the light of their lived experience, these theologies arrive at conclusions that are unique but not contradictory to universal theology. These conclusions have great significance for Asians, but are rarely arrived at, much less highlighted by classical theology. Enumerated below are a few such salient Asian theological conclusions, which may also be considered as characteristics of Asian theology.

God is Actively Present in all His Creation

Asian theology agrees with mainstream Catholic theology in its fundamental tenets of belief, especially in its main sources of theology: tradition, Scripture, and the magisterium. However, what is uniquely Asian is its use of other 'sources' which it calls 'resources' in order to make a clear distinction between the customary Catholic sources of theology and the latter. This distinction between 'sources' and 'resources' was first made by the Office of Theological Concerns (OTC) of the FABC (see Tirimanna 2007: 287–289). Accordingly, ancient Asian civilizations, cultures, religions, philosophies, the ethos of the multitudes of Asians, their degrading poverty, their struggles for liberation are all considered resources of theology. Asian theologians are convinced that such resources cannot be left out in theologizing because they have been (and continue to be) the arenas of God's active presence from time immemorial. This peculiar Asian theological conviction runs through all Asian theologies and is a key to understand the uniqueness of Asian theology, as we shall see in what follows in this chapter. The Asian sense of the divine has to do with a God or 'gods' who is/are interested in the totality of this world, in all the affairs of its peoples, not cut off from them. Consequently, for Asians, the Western distinction between secular and religious is artificial, and so they speak of an incarnated God, not a God who is up in the clouds. Pointing out that in most Asian countries, religion and culture are intrinsically intertwined, Aloysius Pieris, for example, insists that any Asian theology that refuses to be baptized in the 'Jordan' of Asian religions and on the 'Calvary' of Asian poverty is not worth its name (Pieris 1988: 63; 1989: 41).

Christian belief upholds that God is omnipresent and eternal; moreover, this ubiquitous, eternal presence of God is an active saving presence. It ought to rationally follow then that ever since the creation of the world God has been actively present in it, and the history of this saving divine presence is not limited to/by any particular time or space. Thus, his saving presence is not limited to/by any human institution, including religion, be it Judaism, Christianity or any other (O'Collins 2008); 'The Spirit blows where He (p. 879) wills' (John 3:8). God's active saving presence not only transcends but also predates any institutional religion.

Asian Christians who live side by side with millions of adherents of other vibrant religions (some of whom are not only their close acquaintances but also family members) have grappled for centuries with the crucially important question: what effect would God's universal saving will have on those millions of Asians who are not members of the Church (a question that also motivates O'Collins 2008: 189). This question becomes crucial and disturbing when many Asian Christians through their own first-hand experience know such people who live extremely virtuous, God-fearing, morally upright lives. At their very first meeting in 1974, the Asian bishops addressed this issue when they said in their final statement:

> In Asia especially this [evangelization] involves a dialogue with the great religious traditions of our peoples. In this dialogue we accept them as significant and positive elements in the economy of God's design of salvation. In them we recognize and respect profound spiritual and ethical meanings and values. Over many centuries they have been the treasury of the religious experiences of our ancestors, from which our contemporaries do not cease to draw light and strength. They have been (and continue to be) the authentic expression of the noblest longings of their hearts, and the home of their contemplation and prayer. They have helped to give shape to the histories and cultures of our nations. How then can we not give them reverence and honor? And how can we not acknowledge that God has drawn our peoples to Himself through them?
>
> (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 14)

Thus, the bishops, with their first-hand lived Asian experience, reiterated that the Spirit of God has been active in the Asian realities even before the first Christian missionaries arrived in the continent. This way of perceiving the living Asian reality, especially Asian religions, is radically different from that which predominated in the Church before the Second Vatican Council. Of course, Vatican II did affirm the saving presence of the Spirit of God in every individual person (*LG* 16; *GS* 22), and acknowledged the presence of good, holy, and true elements, and of the 'seeds of the Word' in other religions (*Nostra Aetate* 1–2; *Ad Gentes* 11). But, the Council did not speak explicitly of the saving presence of the Spirit in other religions, a fact which the Asian bishops explicitated during the decade immediately after the Council. Thus, since 1970s, the Asian bishops have officially taught their faithful that other religions could save (and indeed had saved) multitudes of their fellow Asians, not merely in spite of, but precisely because of practising those reli-

gions. The uniquely innovative nature of this Asian understanding of other religions becomes all the more evident when one reads the universal magisterial teachings on religions in the immediate aftermath of the Council. For example, in his *Evangelii nuntiandi* in 1975, Pope Paul VI still had a somewhat negative view of other religions and saw them as 'imperfect' ways of seeking God. He went on to affirm that 'by virtue of our religion a true and living relationship with God is established which other religions cannot achieve even though they seem, as it were, to have their arms raised up to heaven' (*Evangelii nuntiandi* 53). In contrast to this papal affirmation, the Asian bishops through (p. 880) their very contextual experience had taught the previous year 'that God has drawn our peoples to Himself through them'.

This fundamental Asian Christian belief was formally recognized by the universal magisterium in 1991 when Pope John Paul II taught:

> The Spirit manifests himself in a special way in the Church and in her members. Nevertheless his presence and activity are universal, limited neither by space nor time … The Spirit's presence and activity affect not only the individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions
>
> (*Redemptoris missio*, 28).

In his book interview of 1994, the same pope recalled the historic Assisi meeting of different religious representatives in 1986, stating that together with his numerous visits to countries of the Far East, it convinced him more than ever that 'the Holy Spirit works efficaciously even outside the visible organism of the Church' (see John Paul II, 1994. See also John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 15; *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* [*CDF*] 1984, 29). Universal theology, too, now seems to have been influenced by the same teaching. In his recent study on God's 'Other Peoples' and their salvation (a work based mainly on the Bible), Gerald O'Collins, for example, could convincingly demonstrate God's universal will to save all peoples, irrespective of institutional boundaries, a conviction very dear to Asian theologians (O'Collins 2008: 256).

Pluralistic Diversity Necessarily Demands a Dialogical Existence

Pluralistic diversity is a necessary characteristic of Asia. Pluralism as understood in Asia is radically different from pluralism as understood elsewhere, for instance, Western pluralism in Europe or North America. Whereas Western pluralism has its own particular historical trajectory and the philosophical roots (with its own liberal origin, individualistic inspiration, and rationalistic approach), Asian pluralism has its roots in the concrete day-to-day lived experience with neighbours and family members who belong to other religions and cultures. As such, the latter is not a purely speculative preoccupation of creating a system (pluralism) out of many religions; it is not a remote, rational exercise but a concrete reality of life in Asia. This is why Asian theologians plead not to read Asian pluralism using the lens of Western pluralism.

Besides, in Asia, pluralism is not a question of entertaining many ‘truths’ according to different subjects who hold them (which is pure relativism), but it is a question of considering truth as one single mystery. God is the One Absolute Truth who can never be comprehended fully by any human being. While Christianity distinguishes itself from all other religions by its insistence on God’s closeness to His creation mainly through His incarnation, it also maintains His infinitely transcendental otherness. Thus, all the (p. 881) leading theologians in history speak about the incomprehensibility of God—the very fact that is universally stressed in Asian God-talk. Even when God reveals Himself, the basic fact that He remains an incomprehensible mystery is not cancelled out (1 Cor. 13:12). However, this mystery of one truth, according to Asians, can be approached reverently and in different ways (as diverse living faith traditions do), and all these ways are surely not equal. Consequently, these different ways may grasp or perceive the one mystery of truth in different levels and degrees. A sharing of such perceptions in a spirit of dialogue, according to the Asians, will enable one to better comprehend the one true mystery: ‘We pledge ourselves to an open, sincere, and continuing dialogue with our brothers of other great religions of Asia, that we may learn from one another how to enrich ourselves spiritually and how to work more efffectively together on our common task of total human development’ (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 9). Hence the importance of interreligious dialogue for Asian theology.

It is in this sense that Asian theologians readily use the available Asian ‘resources’ to shed further light on this mystery fully revealed by Jesus Christ so that an understanding of God to the maximum possible level could be achieved. Thus, it is not a question of ‘resources’ substituting the classical Christian sources of theology (nor even substituting the fullness of revelation in Christ), but rather it is a matter of fathoming the same mystery by other means available in order to get a better picture of the one divine mystery, as far as it is humanly possible (as happened with early Christian use of non-Christian Greek resources. See Tirimanna 2008: 368). In doing so, Asians simply echo Thomas Aquinas who quotes Ambrosiaster: ‘Every truth no matter by whom it is said, comes from the Holy Spirit’ (*ST* I–II, q.109, 1, ad 1).

The Lived Reality of Harmony is an Essential Asian Theological Concept

As Pope John Paul II noted ‘the most striking feature of the continent is the great variety of its peoples who are heirs to ancient cultures, religions and traditions’ (*Ecclesia in Asia*, 6). Throughout history, Asian peoples have been known for their spirit of religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The traditional Asian holistic approach to life demands the virtue of harmony, which has been practised in almost all cultures of Asia. Accordingly, opposites can exist side by side without necessarily clashing with each other. Neither is there any need to eliminate them, for in fact, they complement each other in attaining fullness or completeness: ‘Diversity is not something to be regretted and abolished, but to be celebrated and promoted, since it represents richness and strength’ (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 321). The East Asian concept of *yin and yang*, according to which various dimensions of reality are not contradictory but complimentary, illustrates this point well

(Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 322). In South Asia, according to the Upanishads and also in the thought of all great Indian thinkers, the Supreme (p. 882) Being himself is the coincidence of opposites (Mishra 1996: 21). As the Sanskrit term *samanvaya* implies, similarities and disparities of our human living need to exist together. Thus, the FABC says: 'there is an Asian approach to reality, a world-view, wherein the whole is the sum total of the web of relationships and interaction of the various parts with each other, in a word, harmony, a word which resonates with all Asian cultures' (Tirimanna 2007: 166). One commentator captures succinctly the depth of this peculiarly Asian concept of harmony:

> Asians are not as quick to divide large metaphysical concepts in two as traditional Western Aristotelian thought has done for millennia. Asians prefer to unite, not divide. Good and evil are less two sides of a coin than places on a large prism … the emphasis here is on achieving wholeness, mystical unity, Oneness.
>
> (Fox 2002: 41)

In Euro-American theologies, logic functions in and through the principle of non-contradiction—two contrary affirmations cannot be true simultaneously. It has to be either one or the other. Many Western theological dichotomies (such as nature–super nature; body–soul; matter–spirit; human–divine; secular–holy; world–Church) have their roots in this strictly rational 'either or' approach. Asians, however, do not make such hairsplitting distinctions; for them, the entire reality has to be grasped holistically, in its totality. Thus, instead of making rational distinctions and separating phenomena of reality accordingly, they prefer to be inclusive. They prefer to see nature and super nature together, body and soul together, matter and spirit together, human and divine together, secular and holy together, world and Church together. That is, they prefer an inclusive 'and' approach to an exclusive 'either or' approach (Amaladoss 2008: 21–22).

It is precisely within this rich but peculiarly Asian concept of harmony that the Asian bishops could dare to propose a triple dialogue with the three main Asian realities of life as the concrete manifestation of the Church's evangelizing mission in Asia: dialogues with the vibrant religious traditions, ancient cultures, and teeming millions of Asian poor (Rosales and Arevalo 1992:14–15. See also 280, Eilers 1997: 2 and Tirimanna 2014: 51). At the very base of this concept of triple dialogue is the presumption that people of other religions and cultures in Asia are not to be treated as mere 'objects of Christian mission' but as cosubjects ('partners in the Asian community, where there must be mutual witness' Fernandes 1991: 548). This is because the Spirit of God has been present and active in those Asian realities even before the arrival of Christianity on the ancient continent.

Thus, the FABC could see the objective of interreligious dialogue as 'mutual understanding, appreciation of differences, affirming and enriching the identity of the other as other, and yet growth in the similarities which we experience' (Mishra 1996: 24). Basically, any dialogue is the harmony, the conjunction of the opposites. Dialogue is the way to reach *samanvaya*, and so, as believers of diverse religions, those who partake in dialogue are all copilgrims in pursuit of truth and justice, love and peace (Painadath 1996: 30).

(p. 883) However, it should be noted that the FABC has consistently rejected the common but simplistic and rather superficial understanding of harmony as a mere absence of strife: 'Harmony is not simply the absence of strife, described as "live and let live". The test of true harmony lies in the acceptance of diversity as richness' (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 321). The FABC teachings imply the importance not only of unity in diversity, but also vice versa, which is often forgotten in theological circles today—diversity in unity:

> Samanvaya is the spiritual pursuit of the totality of reality in its infinite diversity and radical unity. Since the ultimate ground of being is unity-in-plurality, the divergent forms of reality are perceived in the convergent rhythm that harmonizes them. Harmony evolves by respecting the otherness of the other and by acknowledging its significance in relation to the totality. Consequently, the unique significance of every religion is gratefully and critically perceived within the context of the universal spiritual evolution of humanity.
>
> (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 33)

Theology Occurs in and through Lived Contexts

A necessary corollary of using 'resources' in addition to the traditional sources of theology is to be noticed in the method of doing Asian theology. A thorough study of this method was undertaken by the FABC, and published in 2000 under the title *Methodology: Asian Christian Theology, Doing Theology in Asia Today* (see Tirimanna 2007: 255–343). Asian theologians are reluctant to be exclusively deductive in arriving at their theological conclusions. They tend to be more inductive, giving a unique place to lived experience of the believers, so much so that experience itself becomes a resource of theology (on the meaning of the term 'experience' in the context of Asian theology, see Wilfred 1998: 899–901). As a rule, FABC theological documents begin with the lived reality and also end with the same lived reality, often with pastoral recommendations.

Like its Latin American and African counterparts, Asian theology in its essence is contextual. In classical European theology, faith is perceived mainly as a body of truths or dogmas. Philosophy is used to understand, explain, and defend them. It starts with first principles drawn from doctrine and develops them logically and deductively. On the contrary, Asian theology's starting point is contextual faith experience. Questions that arise in a given particular historical, cultural context are posed to the received faith tradition. Such questions are sharpened and clarified by analysing the concrete situation with the help of humanitarian sciences, such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology, and of course, with Asian 'resources'. A reinterpretation of tradition in the context follows.

What is uniquely Asian (against the contextual theologies of Latin America and Africa) is its context itself: the vibrating presence of ancient cultures and great religions (which do not seem to disappear in spite of centuries of Christian missionary work in (p. 884) Asia) in and through which the Spirit has been actively present. As already mentioned, these Asian contextual realities become resources of Asian theology. It is in this sense that

Asian theologians take great pains to be one with their Asian ethos. Rather than encapsulating their Christian faith in clearcut logical statements which are deduced from abstract premises, they prefer—true to their Asian epistemologies—to extract concepts from lived experiences which have accumulated in popular Asian stories and symbols. Of course, in the process, such stories and symbols need to go through some sort of interpretation. They are aware that a plurality of interpretations is possible, but consider such a plurality of interpretations as enriching. After all, the four canonical Gospels themselves are four different but valid interpretations of the one life story of Jesus of Nazareth. The diversity of these Gospels is shaped not only by the faith experience of the Gospel writers, but also by that of the lived context of the community to whom they were addressing their message. The mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the God-made-man, is surely much broader than any of the Gospels. Asians rightly point out that their lived Asian experience and the stories and symbols that are derived from that experience, are much broader than any statement or dogma of faith. Moreover, symbols engage the whole person (imagination and emotions), not merely human reason (Amaladoss 2008: 19–20). The Asian preference to accept and believe not mere teachers of religions, but ‘gurus’ (holy persons) who teach their adherents through living what they teach, also substantiates this particular Asian conviction (John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 43). Given their contextually minority status, such a proclamation mainly through witnessing also fits well for Asian Christians.

A question that has worried generations of Asian Christians is why, after so many centuries of dedicated missionary activity on this vast continent, does Christianity remain a tiny minority religion? This question becomes acute for Asians as they live in the midst of great ancient religions that have brought meaning and purpose to billions of their fellow Asians of different generations. The deep religious sense of Asians, most of whom belong to the great ancient religions, is a ‘given’ for Asian Christians in their lived reality, and therein, the crucial question for them is, how to make sense of these non-Christians, their spiritualities, their sense of the sacred, their upright moral lives … How to relate to them? Of course, the Asian bishops gave a response some three decades ago when they said that those great Asian religions ‘have been the treasury of the religious experiences of our ancestors, from which our contemporaries do not cease to draw light and strength’.

It is also important to point out here that FABC theology, which exemplifies most of Asian theologizing, is pastoral or people oriented. The FABC documents generally begin with the concrete pastoral context, and then read the challenges they pose to Christian belief, and finally try to respond to those challenges pastorally in the light of Asian-Catholic faith, based on Scripture, tradition, magisterium, and other uniquely Asian resources. In other words, the challenges spring forth from the pastoral context and they lead back to the pastoral context, hence it is a sort of a spiral, a ‘pastoral spiral’, to be precise. In other words, such theology is more practical, people-linked than purely speculative.

(p. 885) The Kingdom Preached by Jesus is Wider than the Visible Church

Asian theologies draw great inspiration from the fact that Jesus focused his entire ministry on the values of God's kingdom. While acknowledging the indispensible role that the Church plays in proclaiming and realizing that kingdom, they explicitate the fact that the kingdom is much wider than the Church, and that it includes other realities outside the Church, especially other religions. This, of course, is a necessary corollary of God's universal saving presence, and also of the Asian treatment of such realities as 'resources' of theology. The FABC documents consistently affirm this belief. For example, the Theological Advisory Commission of the FABC says: '… there is a kind of identification between the Church and the Kingdom. The mystery of the Kingdom of God is, however, greater than the Church in extension' (Tirimanna 2007: 33). Then, an Asian theological Consultation says:

> The Kingdom of God is universally present and at work. Wherever men and women open themselves to the transcendent Divine Mystery which impinges upon them, and go out of themselves in love and service of fellow human beings, there the Reign of God is at work … In all such cases people respond to God's offer of grace through Christ in the Spirit and enter into the Kingdom through an act of faith … This goes to show that the Reign of God is a universal reality, extending far beyond the boundaries of the Church. It is the reality of salvation in Jesus Christ, in which Christians and others share together; it is the fundamental 'mystery of unity' which unites us more deeply than differences in religious allegience are able to keep us apart.
>
> (Eilers 1997: 200)

As the Fifth Plenary Assembly of the FABC says: 'In an Asia marked by diversity and torn by conflicts, the Church must in a special way be a sacrament—a visible sign and instrument of unity and harmony' (Rosales and Arevalo 1992: 282). Later, Pope John Paul II would confirm this belief consistently held by the Asians, when he said:

> The Church serves the Kingdom by spreading througout the world the 'Gospel values' which are an expression of the Kingdom and which help people to accept God's plan. It is true that the inchoate reality of the Kingdom can also be found beyond the confines of the Church among peoples everywhere, to the extent that they live 'Gospel values' and are open to the working of the Spirit who breathes when and where he wills (see John 3:8).
>
> (*Redemptoris missio* 20)

While stressing that the kingdom cannot be detached either from Christ or from the Church, the same pope also affirms that 'the Church is not an end unto herself, since she is ordered toward the Kingdom of God of which she is the seed, sign and instrument' (*Redemptoris Missio* 18). Asian theologians take it almost literally that the Christian (p. 886)

minority in Asia has to be the seed, sign, and instrument, especially in their role of witnessing.

Theology Needs to Bring Total, Integral Human Liberation

Asia is the continent of teeming millions of poor and downtrodden who live in utterly dehumanizing conditions, and no genuinely Asian theology can simply ignore this living reality. In fact, Asian theologians not only consider the poor as a theological resource but they also speak of 'the religiousness of the poor' (Pieris 1988: 124–125). Already in 1970s, the Asian bishops called for a vibrant dialogue with the poor, especially in and through the 'Option for the Poor' in Asia. Besides, in the Asian religiocultural ethos, an authentically religious person is someone who has voluntarily embraced poverty and leads a simple, ascetical life. Consequently, in Asia, one sees two types of poverty: the 'imposed poverty' under which millions of Asians ('victims of mammon') reel in their struggles to just survive; and 'voluntary poverty', which is embraced by a few people of all religions ('renouncers of mammon'). The former are poor by circumstances and not by option, while the latter are poor by option for the sake of the kingdom values preached by Jesus (Pieris 1998: 58–61). To follow Jesus of the Gospels, therefore, is to be in the company of Jesus, that is to be in the company of the poor, so that the latter may be liberated from their dehumanizing conditions (Pieris 1998: 61–62). As a necessary corollary of this, Cardinal Tagle (1957–) insists that the Asian Church in order to be a truly authentic and credible sacrament of Christ in Asia, needs to be the servant of the poor, by being in solidarity with the poor: 'Our experience tells us that the very identity and credibility or "authority" of the Church in Asia rest heavily on how it dialogues with the poor in the spirit of kenosis' (Tagle 2011: 130). He goes on:

> Kenosis does not only enable the Church to engage in a dialogue of life and solidarity with the poor. It is a potent way to serve the full blossoming of the humanity of the poor, as it protests against what dehumanizes them. There is forced or imposed poverty that enslaves, a poverty caused by 'the flesh'. But there is voluntary poverty embraced in the freedom of the Spirit as an antidote to and protest against coercive poverty. One destroys human beings while the other frees human beings into fullness
>
> (Tagle 2011: 130).

In this regard, the two categorical assertions made by Pieris (both of which are based on the Bible) are important: that there is an unbreakable covenant between Yahweh and the poor; and that there is an irreconciliable enmity between Yahweh and Mammon (Pieris 1988: 120–124). Therefore, Asian theologians consider it a must that the Church rejects Mammon by identifying herself with the victims of the Mammon, for the sake of the total, integral liberation of the victims. Later, Pope John Paul II would recognize this (p. 887) vital element when he called on Asian Catholics to become a Church of the poor and for the poor (*Ecclesia in Asia* 34).

Conclusion

In the process of enumerating some of the uniquely Asian theological conclusions, our aim was to shed light on some of the characteristics of Asian theology. It should be more than obvious that without walking in Asian shoes, no one will be able to understand what Asian theology really is. However, there is a mutual enrichment between the universal Catholic theology and Asian theology. During the past few decades they have been in a living and mutually enriching dialogue. In and through both, the same Spirit of God has been at work, at saving work, to be precise. Asian theology is not something parallel to universal Catholic theology, existing in its own right, but rather, it is very much Catholic theology, born and nurtured within the universal Catholic theological tradition, but bearing uniquely Asian theological nuances and implications, within the vast and varied Asian contexts. In the Introduction to their monumental work, Bevans and Schroeder wrote:

> Christian mission is both anchored in fidelity to the past and challenged to fidelity in the present. It must preserve, defend and proclaim the constants of the church's traditions; at the same time it must respond creatively and boldly to the contexts in which it finds itself. Christian history is the story of the church in mission. It is, to borrow the eloquent phrase of Harvie Conn, a story of the encounter of Eternal Word with changing worlds. As we express it in this book, it is a story of constants in context.
>
> (Bevans and Schroeder 2005: 1).

Asian theology is an effort to perceive and live the Christian 'constants' in the extremely religious, culturally rich, and dehumanizingly poor Asian contexts. No doubt, such theology challenges classical Western theology to reinterpret Catholic faith to the ever-changing contemporary world. With the contemporary phenomena of globalization and mass migrations, even the non-Asian parts of the world have become multireligious and multicultural. In this sense, perhaps, non-Asian Catholicism has something to learn from Asian Catholics about how to interpret their faith in their new contexts, since Asians have already gone through that phase for some decades now, thanks to the diverse forms of Asian theology.

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Catholic Theology in Africa

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter introduces Catholic theology in Africa. The encounter between Africa and Christianity is divided into three periods. The first of these runs from the beginning of Christianity to ad 1500. During this period Christianity flourished and produced some of the major theologians of the patristic period, and then survived with difficulty after the rise of Islam. The second period runs from ad 1500 to 1800. During this period there were certainly African priests and African seminaries, but little theological writing. The third period covers ad 1800 to the present day. This chapter considers the many theological voices and movements of this period beginning with inculturation theology and liberation theology, and ending with critiques of these movements and the emergence of a more firmly doctrinal theology in recent decades.

Keywords: Africa, inculturation, evangelization, preaching, colonialism, liberation theology

THE scope of this chapter is limited to Catholic theology in Africa and does not extend to the work of theologians of other Churches and ecclesial communities in Africa. Theology is a quest for God, a quest to understand God and his ways, and a speech about the God who reveals himself. It is a search for understanding and a speech about the search, a speech in which the speaker seeks to understand for himself and seeks to explain to his audience the One he has found, or rather, the One who has found him. As a speech, theology has an audience, and the African audience of Catholic theology needs to be described. I will do so by dividing the encounter between Africa and Christianity into three periods.

Three Periods and Three Audiences

It is a well-known fact that Africa remains largely unknown. Even in these days of information overload, going by the content, the way and manner in which the African continent is reported in the international media, and what is reported about Africa in travel advisories emanating from Western foreign ministries, it may be difficult for those who have never visited Africa to know what to make of her. The Africa reported in the international

media is nothing but a continent crushed under the combined weight of high- and low-grade military conflicts, poverty, disease, corruption, and incompetent governance. But Africa does not lend itself to any easy definition or facile description.

The African continent is neither culturally nor racially nor ethnically monolithic. Africa, before her encounter with European colonialists, was a collage of empires, kingdoms, and city states, a mosaic of ethnic communities. Their borders were, to a large extent, blurred by commercial activities and military expeditions. So much has been written about the transatlantic slave trade and the colonization of Africa by Europe. (p. 891) Incredibly little has been written about the intra-African slave trade that preceded, facilitated, and succeeded the transatlantic slave trade. African ethnic communities waged wars against each other in a seemingly ceaseless quest for commodities and cheap labour, with the conquered taken as slaves and their land taken as territories of expanding empires. Africa was far from enjoying the peace of paradise before the Europeans came; Africans were at war with each other. These wars should be seen as largely, but not solely exposing the vulnerability of Africa vis-à-vis transatlantic slavery and colonialism.

After European flags were lowered and the flags of newly emerging African states were hoisted in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Africa became a continent of states and peoples who, in varying degrees, had been assimilated into the cultures and languages of erstwhile colonial powers. Thus, we now have anglophone, francophone, and lusophone Africa. The colonialists considered African languages and cultures inferior to theirs.

The advent of European colonialists might have imposed peace on warring African ethnic communities. The imposition of the language of a colonial power might have provided a medium of communication for peoples without linguistic affinity. But it did not take long for the artificially created states to begin to unravel. In virtually every state created by the colonial powers, power was in the hands of an ethnic majority and was used in ways that alienated other ethnic communities within the same state. Ethnicity, a legitimate love of one’s ethnic affiliation, or rather, what should be seen as patriotism, quickly degenerated into ethnocentrism, which is entry into a malicious solidarity with members of one’s ethnic community to the detriment of the legitimate interests of others of different ethnic communities. Enthronement of ethnic hegemony met with resistance, the resistance was met with political repression, and with ethnic cleansing in some instances. Africa returned to the theatre of conflicts.

The ethnic and regional diversity that characterizes the continent renders all generalization invalid and unintelligible. With the exception of Ethiopia, all the states are creation of colonial powers. With this in mind, one is advised to avoid the fallacy of ‘the African perspective’ and to look out for the perspectives of Africans.

Also pertinent to this discussion is the equally complex history of Christianity in Africa. A simplistic but repeated misreading of history would associate the advent of Christianity to Africa with the economy-inspired advent of the West to Africa, to Portuguese and Spanish merchants, to the transatlantic slave trade, and to colonialism. This inaccurate reading of history fails to differentiate the three distinct moments of Africa’s encounter with Chris-

tianity. The first encounter between Africa and Christianity was at the beginning of Christianity itself, encompassing a period of approximately AD 62 to 1500. The second phase could be dated from 1500 to 1800, while the third, from approximately 1800 to our era. That long and winding history is summed up beautifully in the words of John Baur:

> Christianity in Africa is neither a recent happening, nor a by-product of colonialism—its roots go back to the very time of the Apostles. …
>
> The Church had been flourishing on the northern shore of this continent for six hundred years before Islam. Egypt and North Africa with their great (p. 892) theologians, such as Athanasius and Augustine, were the pillars of the universal Church. Unfortunately, through Arab occupation, starting in 640, the expansion of Christianity received a heavy blow. It almost died out in North Africa, surviving as an oppressed, though significant, minority in Egypt until the present time.
>
> The subsequent history of Christian presence in Africa through the centuries is like a trickling stream through the desert. Yet God's providence never let it dry up and in our days it has become a great flood watering the whole continent
>
> (Baur 2009: 18).

In the first moment of the encounter between Africa and Christianity, Egypt, North Africa, Nubia, and Ethiopia, owed their evangelization to the initial apostolic fervour of early Christianity, not to missionaries originating from Western Europe or North America. The evangelist Mark is unanimously venerated by Egyptian tradition as having founded the apostolic see of Alexandria, ordaining Annianus its first bishop in AD 62 (see Baur 2009: 21).

In the second period, evangelization came to sub-Saharan Africa simultaneously with merchants from Portugal. The Portuguese, with papal approval, established ecclesiastical jurisdiction over territories reached by their merchants and sea explorers. One cannot completely dissociate this second wave of evangelization from the commercial interests of the economic superpower of the era. It was a period of three centuries of Christianization of a huge portion of sub-Saharan Africa during which the kings of the Kongo, Mwene Mutapa king of Zimbawe, the kings of Benin, Warri, and Mombasa were converted to Christianity. There were Christian churches on the islands of Cape Verde and Sao Tome, in Elmina, Luanda, and Mozambique. The belief was that the conversion of the king would lead to the conversion of his subjects. In the absence of a carefully crafted programme of inculturation of the faith, this second attempt collapsed after three hundred years.

In the third wave, the advent of Christianity was facilitated by the return of freed slaves from America, the missionary enterprise of churches of the Protestant Reform, and the emergence of missionary societies and religious orders in the Catholic Church, such as the Society of African Missions (SMA), the White Fathers (known today as Missionaries of Africa), the Comboni, the Dominicans, Spiritans, and Augustinians, to mention but a few. These groups began their missions in the precolonial period, consequently, it would be

simplistic to see them as riding on the back of colonialism. At the same time, it is undeniable that their inadequate understanding and lack of appreciation of the culture and religion of the tribal communities in sub-Saharan Africa, and a corresponding racial superiority complex made it impossible for many to differentiate between authentic evangelization and cultural alienation of Africans. They preached a Christianity with Western expression making it difficult for Christianity with an African face to emerge.

If one were to describe the audiences of theology in the three periods that have just been discussed, it would be important to say that the audience of theology in the first period of evangelization of Africa was very much under the influence of Graeco-Roman world. But in the second and third periods, the audience was characterized by diversity (p. 893) of language, religion, and culture. The audience in the second period faced the challenge of receiving the Gospel without falling victim of cultural alienation. The audience in the third period lived in cultural alienation, political repression, and economic deprivation. This would influence the agenda of inculturation and liberation of which I will speak in the next part of the chapter. Throughout the chapter it is important to bear in mind that the diversity of Africa counsels caution in using the expression 'African theology'. It is prudent and safer to speak of theology in Africa, that is, of a discourse on God before an African audience, than to speak of an African theology.

The Shape of Catholic Theology in Africa

The brief outline of the history of Christianity in Africa undertaken above provides a framework within which one can comment on Catholic theology in Africa. In considering the context and audience of any theological reflection, the saying is true that the audience makes the orator. The listener conditions the speaker. In specific terms, a theology is shaped by and elaborated within a given context. The people who live in this context have their questions and presuppositions which pose challenges to their faith. They need to grasp the meaning and coherence of their faith in the context in which they live. We are, thus, in a position to identify some of the issues that Catholic theology has to face in Africa. The three periods of Christianity in Africa will be used as guide.

The First Period

The first encounter between Christianity and Africa began in the apostolic age and continued through the patristic era. The crucial importance of the theology of the patristic era is well documented (Nichols 1991: 200–209). This was the era in which the main lines of Catholic theology were drawn. It is an important but often forgotten or ignored fact that great theological minds of this era such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, to mention but a few, were Africans. Their theological output shows that Africa, particularly the school of Alexandria, was the epicentre of the Christological controversy which led to the first ecumenical councils and shaped the Creed we profess today.

When Origen (c.185–254) of the Alexandrian school proposed his Christology in the *Peri Archon*, he spoke of a Logos who, as instrument of God at creation, was a creature before all creatures. Yet, he spoke of the Logos as eternal. The contradiction in the Christology of Origen would be radicalized by Arius in the early fourth century. For him, if the Logos was a creature, as postulated by Origen, he could not have been eternal. There was a time he was not. The Arian crisis which triggered the conciliar definition (p. 894) of Niceae and the beautiful Orations of Athanasius began in Alexandria in Africa. The attempt to understand Niceae led to other crises and conciliar definitions up to the one-Person-two-natures-Christology of Chalcedon. At stake was how to understand the Trinity and the incarnation (Studer 1993). The *De Trinitate*, Augustine's landmark treatise on the Trinity, was born in Africa. The Donatist controversy provided an opportunity for the theologian from Hippo to write treatises on the nature of the Church and the sacraments. Africa was also the place where Augustine elaborated his theology of grace, a theology that remains a point of reference for every theology of grace today. Africa was the place where Athanasius's *Life of Anthony* offered the Church an outline of monastic theology, coming from the Alexandrian school whose mystical exegesis provided a pathway that remains in use today. One cannot but draw the conclusion that the intense theological activity of the early Church in Africa enabled her to make a lasting and invaluable contribution to the Church as it spread throughout the world and throughout history. This contribution was the drawing of the perimeter of doctrinal consensus around the Trinity, Christology, grace, and ecclesiology. One can draw a further conclusion here, and that is, in its recourse to patristic ecclesiology, the Second Vatican Council opted to be guided by great teachers of the early Church in Africa.

As stated earlier in the chapter, theology is fundamentally a speech about God. But the best speech about God is the one given by God himself. God is the best speaker about God. When God reveals himself he speaks of himself and of us creatures in relation to God. God's most eloquent speech about himself is Christ Jesus, the Incarnate Word (John 1; Heb. 1). The Incarnate Word, as God's most eloquent speech about himself, and in his person as priest, prophet, and king, is the theologian. Theology ought to reflect his *munus triplex* by being a convergence of spiritual (priestly), intellectual (prophetic), and pastoral (kingly) concerns. This was the theology the early Church in Africa offered the wider Church. Thanks to divine providence, the strength of this theology is still felt today despite the invasion of the Arabs and the advent of Islam that triggered the decline of this Church.

The Second Period

History says little about Catholic theology in the second period of Christianity in Africa. Although there was no notable theological school in Africa during this period, the existence of quite a good number of indigenous African priests in this era would point to some theological activity (Baur 2009: 96–97 speaks of 207 priests from Africa between 1549 and 1899). African priests of this era were trained in Portugal, and Lisbon established the first training facilities for African priests in 1508. About a century later, seminaries were founded in Cape Verde, Sao Tome, and Luanda. The first African seminarian

appeared in Portugal in 1447, that is, 400 years before the first modern African seminary opened in Dakar. He originated from Senegal. The era was not noted for great theological treatises or great theological minds emanating from Africa, but the name Antonio de Couto stands out. He was a Congolese priest from Sao Salvador who studied (p. 895) at the University of Coimbra and became a Jesuit. In 1642, he published in Portuguese and Kimbundu his *Sufficient Instruction of the People of Angola in the Mysteries of our Faith*. According to Baur, 'It was for centuries the only theological work written by an African priest and served as a catechism in Angola' (Baur 2009: 97).

The Third Period

The third period offers a great deal to comment on. I am of the opinion that three factors set the agenda for this period. First, the dichotomy between Western Christianity and African culture and the cultural alienation that came with it set the agenda for a theology of inculturation. Secondly, political oppression and massive violation of fundamental human rights during the colonial era and in the hands of post-colonial regimes especially during prolonged military rule set the agenda for an African liberation theology. Thirdly, the trauma of economic deprivation and social dislocation, the collapse of infrastructure and critical institutions in sectors such as education, law enforcement, and dispensation of justice, and the persistence of superstitious beliefs in the face of poverty, and the absence of medical service encouraged the advent and proliferation of neo-Pentecostal groups and militant Islamic fundamentalist sects. The picture poses the challenge of elaborating a theology that fully assumes responsibility for orthodoxy and sound scholarship in doctrinal explication, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. A closer look at these three genres of theology in contemporary Africa is necessary.

Inculturation Theology

If, in the second period of Africa's encounter with Christianity, evangelization of the Benin Kingdom in the south of modern Nigeria collapsed after two centuries, it was largely because of an absence of inculturation, a failure to take Benin culture seriously. But that did not just happen in the second period, it was re-enacted in the third period when the cultural alienation that came with colonialism largely affected the way Africa was evangelized. Since the African religious world view was not given the attention it deserved, some missionaries inadvertently became agents of cultural alienation.

The failure of missionary theology to take African culture, religion, and civilization seriously, and the cultural alienation engendered by the first missionary enterprise was an issue that the first generation of African theologians in the third period of Christianity had to confront. Their initial response was a collective volume *Des prêtres noirs s'interrogent*, published in 1956, a year before the establishment of the Faculté de Théologie Catholique de Kinshasa. An African theologian whose life and writings epitomize this struggle against cultural alienation in Christianity is the Congolese Vincent Mulago (Mulago 1965).

Mulago and many of his colleagues and students laboured to give birth to a Christianity with an African expression whose doctrines and practices are adapted to (p. 896) the culture of Africans (Bujo and Muya 2003; 2008). The Christian message was to be communicated in African languages using terms, categories, beliefs, rites, symbols, gestures, and institutions of African traditional religions (Mpongo 1968). Whereas early missionaries dismissed all of these as superstitious or demonic practices, pioneer African theologians of the third period saw them as 'stepping stones' to Christianity.

At the vanguard of this theological trend was the Faculté de Théologie Catholique de Kinshasa (now Université Catholique du Congo). The Kinshasa school, as I shall refer to it, provided leadership for other theology schools of the same trend such as the Catholic Higher Institute of East Africa in Nairobi, Kenya (now Catholic University of East Africa), the Catholic Institute of West Africa in Port Harcout, Nigeria, l'Institut Catholique d'Afrique l'Ouest in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (now L'Université Catholique d'Afrique de l'Ouest). The Kinshasa inspiration finds a loud echo at the Spiritan International School of Theology in Attakwu-Enugu, Nigeria.

This theological effervescence corresponded to the exuberant liturgies of many of the local churches in Africa today. Le Rite Zairois brought large numbers of European and North American tourists to Sunday Mass in Kinshasa, especially to L'Eglise St Alphonse. What began in the Congo was soon replicated in other dioceses across sub-Saharan Africa. According to Ngindu Mushete, this theological trend was successful in driving home the point that the Gospel needed to be enfleshed not just in European culture but also in other cultures, in this instance in African culture. However, this theology did not differentiate between the substance of the Gospel and the European expression in which it came to Africans before seeking to adapt it to Africans. Ngindu Mushete is of the opinion that the Christianity this genre of theology claimed to have inculturated was actually European Christianity. Its process of inculturation ought to have begun from the source, that is, from Scripture and tradition. But it did not. Instead of changing the Western robes of missionary Christianity, it attempted to put African robes on it. Bénézet Bujo criticized Charles Nyamiti's attempt at systematic theology as using categories of Western philosophies to do African theology (Bujo 1992: 56; Nyamiti 1971; 1973; 2005; 2006; 2007). Consequently, instead of inculturation of Christianity what it gave birth to was inculturation of European Christianity. It needed to be complemented by research in the areas of fundamental, historical, and biblical theology. Attempts to respond to this need can be found in the works of T. Tshibangu, Ntedika Konde, D. Atal, and L. Monsengwo of the Kinshasa school (Ngindu Mushete 1979).

Despite the critique addressed at Nyamiti, one must not fail to acknowledge that his represents a first effort at doctrinal and systematic theology of inculturation. His boldness as a theologian is seen in his use of the African notion of ancestors to reflect on God, on Christ, and on the communion of saints (Nyamiti 1984; 1986; 1996).

In my estimation, the problem with the first stage of this inculturation theology was not just its failure to grasp the substance of Christianity. Its hermeneutics of African culture

gives the impression that traditional Africa was an instance of Immaculate Conception. It saw African culture and traditional Africa as untainted before the contact with Western colonialism. African culture so understood, some are wont to say misunderstood, was then used as a framework for inculturation theology. But in fact this (p. 897) view of African culture is not African; it is a romanticized version of Africa promoted by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his disciples such as Placide Tempels whose work, *Bantu Philosophy* (2010), was a kind of catechism for the first generation of African inculturation theologians (Leopold Senghor's philosophy of la Négritude falls into this category of neo-Romanticism. Also to be included would be Mobutu Sese Seko's concept of l'Authenticité, which provided a useful distraction while he visited the Congolese with repression and persistent robbery of the enormous economic wealth of his country). It is what Eloi Messi Metogo has described as ethnophilosophy or ethnology (Metogo 1985).

What Ngindu Mushete described as a 'second stage' of African theology is the same genre of African inculturation theology in a different form. Its discourse is heard and seen in the enormous amount of interest in developing 'African Christologies'. These are attempts to paint portraits of Christ that will provide answers to the question: who is Christ for the African (Stinton 2004; Orobator 2008)? Perhaps in response to Ngindu Mushete's critique that the first attempt needed to be complemented by studies in fundamental, systematic, and biblical theologies, Ukachukwu Manus, Justin Ukpong, and Theresa Okure, three of the highly revered founding members of the Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria (CATHAN), attempt to develop a version of intercultural hermeneutics to be at the service of these Christologies (Manus 2003).

The description of the Church as family of God in Africa at the First Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Church in Africa can be described as an achievement of inculturation theology in Africa. In this imagery, African theologians, prelates, and experts at the Synod, used a mode of relationship that connotes strong and harmonious relationship in African cultures to express what the letter to the Ephesians described as the 'household of God'. In so doing, African inculturation theology provided a category apt for a reception of Vatican II ecclesiology of communion. One can therefore conclude that here lies an achievement of inculturation theology in Africa.

Liberation Theology

At a time when Latin American liberation theologians were struggling to do theology in the midst of political repression and economic deprivation, there were also, and still are a number of African theologians who saw the need for a liberation theology in Africa. It was realized that while confrontation of the problem of cultural alienation was necessary, it was not sufficient. Africa's enormous problems of violation of fundamental human rights by repressive and corrupt regimes prevented many Africans from actualizing their potentials. This is very noticeable in the economic impoverishment of a continent of immense resources. African inculturation theology accomplished a great deal in the area of liturgi-

cal inculturation. But the African who participated in such liturgies returned to the problems he or she left at home.

A leading exponent of African liberation theology is the Cameroonian, John Marc Ela. Whether or not one agrees with his presuppositions, assumptions, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations, his book *African Cry* could be described as an African (p. 898) equivalent of Gustavo Gutierrez's *A Theology of Liberation* (Ela 1984; 1984a). In the family of African liberation theology is to be found the writings of Black Theology. Originating in North America through the pioneering efforts of A. Cleage and James Cone, this theology emerged as an attempt to give a Christian response to racism. It found its way into South Africa during the 1970s. The writings of South African Dominican Albert Nolan is to be situated in this genre (Nolan 2001; 2006). The picture would be incomplete without mentioning the interventions of African Catholic women theologians such as Theresa Okure and Rose Uchem. These and others offered their theological reflections in the quest for the promotion of the dignity of the Africa woman (Okure 1988; Uchem 2001).

But commentaries on liberation theologies in Africa have not paid sufficient attention to the interventions of the episcopate in Africa on the social and political challenges facing the continent and its peoples. In countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, to mention but a few, Catholic bishops' conferences have been prophetic voices. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, which holds its plenary meeting twice a year, has not limited its role to simply teaching doctrines of faith. Rather, since the publication of its first letter to Nigerians on 1 October 1960, the date of Nigeria's political independence, it has consistently offered incisive analyses and recommendations on the social, political, and economic situation of the country (Schineller 2002). In making these interventions, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria has been guided by the tradition of Catholic social doctrine bequeathed in papal encyclicals. There are clear attempts to apply the principles of promotion of human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity. Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged this fact in his address to Nigerian bishops on *ad limina* visit in February 2009. In the words of the Holy Father:

> Your dedication to derive from Catholic principles enlightened comments on current national problems is greatly appreciated. … By promoting Catholic Social Doctrine you offer your loyal contribution to your country and assist in the consolidation of a national order based on solidarity and a culture of human rights.

It is a well-known fact that the Conference of Bishops in Nigeria has been a credible voice of conscience crying in the wilderness during the dark days of military rule in Nigeria and since the return to democratic rule on 29 May 1999. Its organ, the Justice Development and Peace Commission, has always participated commendably in election monitoring.

Doctrinal and Systematic Theology

Inculturation theology in Africa has often fallen into the temptation of reducing theology to a discourse in cultural anthropology. African liberation theology, for its part, often reduces theology to socio-political discourse. The theology of the neo-Pentecostal groups re-

duces Christianity to a means of upward socio-economic mobility (Akinwale (p. 899) 2000). In a syncretistic alliance with African traditional beliefs it promises miraculous interventions in moments of crisis by manipulating the fears of the people—fear of death, of evil spirits, of illness, of real and perceived enemies, of material poverty. With militant Islamic fundamentalism and fanaticism, we witness violent conflicts 'in the name of God', in conflicts that are political in inspiration but religious in appearance. At least two major methodological challenges are noticeable in their many attempts to make Christianity 'relevant to Africa'.

The first major methodological challenge is the challenge of careful retrieval and prudent appropriation of indigenous cultures and religions. There is need to avoid self-incarceration in a museographic complex. What is often presented as African is an idealized construction that has no resemblance to what Africa really is.

Secondly, inculturation theology, as it has been done so far by its pioneers and their imitators, betrays attempts at communications without sufficient attention to the functional specialities of doctrines, foundations, dialectic, history, and research. As for African liberation theology, it is tempted to face the questions of today as if the wisdom of yesterday were entirely worthless. African inculturation theology is in need of an adequate retrieval and reception of apostolic tradition. Evidence of this need is seen in the attempts of famous African theologians to do Christology as if the Christological councils never took place, and hermeneutics without reference to the magisterium (which, of course, directly contradicts the teaching of Vatican II's *Dei Verbum*). This is largely because patrology is yet to be given the attention it deserves in curricula of theology in many African seminaries and theological institutes. If, as has been recognized, liturgical inculturation is a necessity, it must be said that the need for liturgical inculturation cannot be met without paying adequate attention to patristic texts.

What is true of liturgy is true of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. Catholic theology must be done with the desire for Christian unity in mind. But, as can be seen in many joint statements of ecumenical partners today, there is an increasing recognition of the need to include the Church Fathers in ecumenical dialogue. For there can be no attainment of a common comprehension of apostolic faith without the guidance of the Fathers. In the same vein, if Catholic theology in Africa is to be profitably involved in interreligious dialogue, it will need the Christology of the Fathers and the councils. In a nutshell, given Africa's contribution to patristic theology in the early Church, Catholic theology in Africa must pay due respect to patristic theology today.

Half a century after the publication of *Des prêtres noirs s'interrogent* and the pioneering work of the Kinshasa school, a new generation of African theologians is emerging, even within the Kinshasa school. This new generation of African theologians recognizes the importance of retrieval of apostolic tradition, appropriation of the achievement of patristic theology, and the task of doctrinal explication even in inculturation and liberation theologies. It is significant that a standard bearer of this generation is a Congolese theologian of the Kinshasa school of today, Léonard Santendi Kinkupu (Kinkupu 2006; 2002; 2010).

Belonging to this new generation of doctrinally minded African theologians is also the Nigerian Spiritan Bede Ukwuije (Ukwuije 2008).

(p. 900) This regeneration of Catholic theology in Africa is seen in the emerging theology school at the Dominican Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Ibadan, Nigeria, which insists on a theological method in which theology is done in two phases. In the first phase, theology retrieves and interprets what is found in Scripture and apostolic tradition, in the Church Fathers, and Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas is seen as a teacher whose admirable synthesis of patristic thought and philosophical thought is worthy of emulation.

In the second phase, what is retrieved and interpreted is explained and communicated in confrontation with Nigerian and African questions. Theology is envisioned as having the task of providing a bridge between doctrine and life. Hence, it must address the Nigerian questions of today by meditating on and proclaiming the faith that comes to us from the apostles. The Dominican school in Ibadan is founded on the conviction that success or otherwise of inculturation should be measured by its proximity or distance to its goal. That presupposes a number of issues—a well-defined goal, ability to recognize and get acquainted with its means, and the ability and willingness to make good use of the means. The goal of inculturation must be an African instantiation of apostolic tradition. Anything short of that is less than successful. The means of attaining this objective is not only knowledge of general and particular properties of African culture, but also an adequate knowledge of the deposit of faith.

As for the elaboration of a theology of liberation, its goal cannot be attained without seeing the relationship between theology and the Church's task of preaching the word of God. Paul VI reminded the Church that preaching is 'carrying forth of the good news to every sector of the human race so that by its strength it may enter into the hearts of men and women and renew the human race'. Its aim is to bring about interior transformation in the lives of people as well as the transformation of the environment in which they live.

> In a word, the Church may be truly said to evangelize when, solely in virtue of that news which she proclaims, she seeks to convert both the individual consciences of persons and their collective conscience, all the activities in which they are engaged and, finally, their lives and the whole environment which surrounds them
>
> (*Evangelii nuntiandi* 18–20).

There is a recognition here of the common objective of evangelization and theology as doxological. This objective is attained by evangelization when it proclaims the wonders of God and invites the hearer of the word to faith. The same objective is attained by theology by seeking to explain the faith that is so proclaimed. In a nutshell, evangelization proclaims the word of God. The proper response to this proclamation of the word is faith in action for promotion of human dignity and the common good, and theology, at the service of evangelization, shows that this faith is neither an assault on nor an insult to human in-

telligence. A theology that is not at the service of evangelization is not a theology worth the name.

The Dominican school, true to the charism of the Dominican order, recognizes that there is a relationship between theology and preaching, and that it is preaching thus (p. 901) understood that truly liberates. Faced with an aggressive neo-Pentecostalism that promotes biblical literalism and immediacy of God's intervention in the preaching of prosperity Gospel, and the reduction of religion to faith plus emotions minus reason; faced with a militant Islamic fundamentalism that refuses to respect freedom of worship or that exercises its freedom of worship in ways that violate the freedom of others; faced with innumerable social, political, and economic crises confronting modern-day Nigeria and Africa, this school saddles itself with the task of elaborating a theology that is at the service of preaching by taking doctrinal responsibility for apostolic faith (Akinwale 2003; Kenny and Akinwale 2001; 2005).

Lusophone and Hispahophone Theology

This chapter has said little or nothing about theology in lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) Africa. That is because, despite the recent celebration of 500 years of Catholicism in a country such as Angola, this linguistic segment of Africa has so far been noted for its silence in Catholic theology. The Universidade Católica de Angola was licenced by the Angolan government on 7 August 1992. Even though its doors were opened to students on 22 February 1999, its faculty of theology only began to offer courses in 2011. But, according to the website of the Episcopal Conference of Sao Tome and Angola, Angolan and Mozambican theologians were present at the International Colloqium on African Theology which took place in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2010 (<http://ceastangola.org/news/angolanos-no-coloquio-international-sobre-a-teologia-fricana_1_144_24.html>).

As for Equatorial Guinea, the only hispanophone country on the African continent, the fact that she has only two institutions of higher learning run by the Spanish National University of Distant Education most probably explains why there is no theology faculty in the country. One should note, however, that Catholic priests in Equatorial Guinea have been voices of opposition to dictatorship, human rights violations, and corruption. Many of these voices of undocumented liberation theology have been arrested and tortured in a society where literary tradition still remains largely oral, not written.

Conclusion

Faith is a necessary response to the proclamation of the word of God. Yet, faith alone is insufficient; faith without reason breeds fundamentalism at best, fanaticism at worst. Fundamentalism and fanaticism are symptoms of the corruption of religion. A corrupt religion is one that maligns God. But there is a direct relationship between blasphemy (p. 902) and violation of human rights. Blasphemy is disrespectful of divine sovereignty, and the violation of divine sovereignty manifests itself in the violation of human rights,

while the violation of human rights is the contestation of divine sovereignty. ‘Whatsoever you do …’ That is why, today, Catholic theology in Africa faces the challenge of detoxifying a religion that has and is still being corrupted.

The religiosity of Africans is well attested. While visitors to cities of the Western societies often discover and remark with shock that such societies that brought Christianity to Africa have become post-Christian, visitors are equally amazed at the open display of religiosity in many Nigerian and African cities. God and religion are marginalized or ostracized by religious indifference in contemporary Western culture, instrumentalized in an explosion of religiosity in contemporary African societies. Catholic theology is able to provide an effective antidote to the marginalization, ostracization, or instrumentalization of God and religion. It is able to provide this antidote because it brings together faith and reason. Reason without faith leads to the ostracization of God and religion. Faith without reason leads to the reduction of religion to an opium, and of God to a crutch.

In this chapter, using as guide the three periods of evangelization of Africa as well as a working notion of theology as a search and a speech, I have attempted to comment on the state of Catholic theology in Africa. The first phase of evangelization coincided with the patristic era and was therefore noted for its contribution to patristic theology. The second phase has been described as a time when theology was largely silent. The third phase has seen the emergence of inculturation, liberation, doctrinal and systematization on its agenda.

The emergence of Pentecostalism in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa with its utilitarian and instrumentalized Gospel of prosperity has added to the magnitude of the challenge of evangelization in our time by increasing the danger of maligning God. When religion is corrupt, God is not rendered his dues, and when God is not rendered his dues, human beings are deprived their dues. The violation of human rights is an impediment to authentic development. For while a suppressed people cannot actualize its potentials, a developed polity is an aggregate of human beings of actualized potentials. Here we see the vital importance of Catholic theology in Africa’s quest for authentic development, that is, a development that is not just the abundance of material prosperity and the availability of infrastructure, but the development of the whole person, the fulfilment of our personal aspirations in our collective aspirations. It takes fidelity to the original idea of the Christian religion to avoid its corruption, and it is this fidelity that Catholic theology must ensure in Africa. If theology is speech about God, good theology ‘protects’ the name of God and the human being who is God’s image.

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter discusses the theological foundations for and character of Roman Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement. Following a consideration of the emergence of the modern ecumenical movement and the Catholic Church's ambivalence towards it, the chapter treats Vatican II as a pivotal development that resulted in the Church's strong commitment to ecumenical engagement. A treatment of the main achievements of the subsequent decades follows, focusing on developments in the dialogue with the Lutheran and Anglican communities. The chapter concludes by examining the gradual stalling of progress in some of these engagements and suggests ways in which the 'receptive ecumenism' movement offers new ways forward.

Keywords: ecumenism, unity, church, Vatican II, Anglicanism, Lutheranism, ecclesiology

Introduction

THE respective linguistic roots of 'Catholicism' and 'Ecumenism*' suggest a certain conceptual overlap, perhaps even necessary interrelationship. 'Catholic' derives from the Greek adverbial phrase *kath'holou*, literally 'according to the whole', which in patristic tradition acquired connotations of completeness (the fullness of truth in Christ) and universality (spread throughout the whole world). 'Ecumenical' derives from *oikoumene* and was used to refer to the extent of the Greco-Roman empire, the entire inhabited world, and to the domain of the whole Christian Church (subsequent to the imperial establishment of Christianity).

When used with reference either to the Church itself or to any specific Christian practices, symbols, or beliefs, 'catholic' and 'ecumenical' each witness to the fundamental claim concerning Jesus Christ's universal significance as the deepest story of 'all things in heaven and on earth' (Col. 1.16). In the Nicene Creed, the great common creed of the Christian churches, catholicity is confessed as an identifying mark of the Church of

Christ. The councils that received the prefix ‘Ecumenical’ (e.g. Nicaea in 325 and Constantinople in 381) are those regarded as definitively articulating Christian belief.

Perhaps, then, the story of ‘Catholicism and Ecumenism’ unfolds as one of unremarkable harmony and straightforward identity with the Church catholic simply understood as the *oikoumene* without distinction? But claims to identity and totality are inherently unstable. When the modern ecumenical movement emerged in the late nineteenth century under largely Protestant inspiration—and understood as seeking ways for the divided churches to act together as the one Church of Christ—far from Catholicism and Ecumenism appearing as natural partners, formal Catholic understanding saw only competing claims to totality.

(p. 906) During the Second Vatican Council (1962–5) official Catholic thinking turned from this stance of isolation and suspicion towards far greater ecumenical engagement, ushering in a period of intense ecumenical activity and hope still regarded by many as the ‘golden age’ of modern ecumenism. Nevertheless, key elements within Catholicism still proceeded cautiously; excessively so for some. Others, however, including Joseph Ratzinger when Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), viewed such caution as appropriate prudence subsequently vindicated by developments that may have pushed aspirations for the re-establishment of sacramental communion beyond foreseeable reach. For example, in the Anglican-Catholic context such developments relate to women’s ordination and, more recently, to divergent formal policy concerning people of homosexual orientation.

This puts Catholicism in an interesting place relative to contemporary ecumenism. On the one hand, Catholicism’s own sense of catholicity requires an irrevocable commitment to the strongest ecumenical aspiration for full sacramental communion. On the other hand, the very way in which Catholic integrity is formally understood makes it extremely difficult in present circumstances for Catholicism to find any realistic way forwards towards this goal. Within the context of faith, however, the counter-intuitive conviction must be that if this aspiration and orientation does indeed remain an abiding imperative then so also will the Lord’s resourcing for the task be constant. The challenge, then, is how Catholicism is to find fresh possibilities in the face of the problems stemming from this dilemma.

This chapter proceeds in five stages. First, attention is given to the emergence of the modern ecumenical movement and official Catholic resistance through to Pope John XXIII’s surprise calling of Vatican II. Second, attention is given to exploring the key shifts in Catholic understanding resulting from the Council. Third is a brief sketch of some of the most significant structural and theological achievements pertaining to Catholic relations with other traditions since Vatican II. Fourth, the chapter identifies some of the factors contributing to the disappointing of earlier hopes and to the widespread sense that we are now at something of an ecumenical impasse. The chapter closes by suggesting an appropriate strategy for the Church to adopt to take forward its ecumenical commitment.

The Beginnings of the Modern Ecumenical Movement and Catholic Reactions

The origins of the modern ecumenical movement lie in the nineteenth-century missionary activities of the Protestant churches and the stark contrast disclosed between the proclaimed gospel of reconciliation and the multiple divisions actually marking the churches (for more historical information about the movement see Rouse and Neill (p. 907) 1993, Fey 2004, and Briggs et al. 2004, and Lossky 2002). This profound performative contradiction was recognized as diminishing the churches' witness and impelling them towards reconciliation rather than competition. This calling eventually issued in the historic 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, commonly regarded as the birthplace of the modern ecumenical movement. In the same year the need was also expressed for a further world conference pertaining to doctrinal, ecclesiological, and ministerial differences between the churches. These different concerns—for integrity of witness and mission and for coherence of belief and structure—gave rise respectively to the Life and Work movement (first meeting in Stockholm in 1925) and the Faith and Order movement (first meeting in Lausanne in 1927). Between them, these provide the two streams flowing into the formation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948 and which have since coexisted, at times somewhat uneasily.

From shortly after the First World War some groups within the Orthodox world also shared in these initiatives (see 'Catholicism and Eastern orthodoxy' by Jaroslav Skira). In contrast, throughout this period Rome declined to participate. For example, the pontificate of Pope Benedict XV (1914–22) saw a general ban on participation in meetings with other Christians enshrined in the 1917 Code of Canon Law (canon 1325). A similar ban covered sharing in acts of worship except in the most restricted and exceptional of circumstances. The basic logic of this argument followed Catholic teaching since the Council of Trent which equated the Catholic Church exclusively with the one true Church of Christ. Association with other Christians must thus be a false irenicism, suggesting a false equivalence. The only real way forward is one of return to Rome. The clearest articulation of this attitude is found in Pope Pius XI's 1928 encyclical *Mortalium animos*, 'On Fostering Religious Union':

> There is only one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it; for from that one true Church they have in the past unhappily fallen away.

However, while official Catholic response to the emergent ecumenical movement mostly took this uncompromising stance until the 1950s, there were other Catholic contributions of a notably more creative kind. Of lasting significance is the 1908 initiative of Paul Watson (1863–1940; one of the convert founders of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement in the United States) to establish a Catholic octave of prayer for Christian unity, situated between the then date of the feast of the Chair of St Peter (18 January) and the feast of the

Conversion of St Paul (25 January), the dates it still keeps today. This octave (essentially for the conversion of other Christians) was subsequently broadened in 1935, by the prophetic Abbé Paul Couturier of Lyons (1881–1953), into the more nuanced Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 'as Christ wishes and by the means which he desires', that it remains today.

Prior to this, Cardinal Mercier of Malines (1851–1926), Belgium had hosted a ground-breaking dialogue between Anglican and Catholic theologians during the early 1920s which gave rise to the prescient idea, whose time is still fully to come, of 'united but not (p. 908) absorbed' to refer to the possibility of a reconciled unity in diversity. Again, a number of individual Catholic scholars, frequently at great personal cost, engaged closely with Protestantism. The French Dominican Yves Congar (1904–95) stands out (see for example Congar 1939). Although he would later become one of the key shaping influences on Vatican II, during the mid-1950s Congar had to endure a prolonged silencing in the light of Pope Pius XII's 1950 encyclical *Humani generis*, concerned to identify various perceived dangers in contemporary theology.

The late 1940s and early 1950s witnessed a number of tentative ecumenical Catholic initiatives. In 1949, following the 1948 first assembly of the WCC, the Holy Office issued a letter, *Ecclesia sancta*, praising the ecumenical efforts of other Christians, attributing these to 'the inspiration of the Holy Spirit', and allowing, in principle, for Catholics to engage in ecumenical discussions. While this did not translate into allowing for participation in the second assembly of the WCC held in 1954, it did result in the formation of the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Relations in 1952, a forerunner for what in 1960 would become the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU). By the time of the third assembly of the WCC (in New Delhi in 1961) the climate allowed for the involvement of SPCU observers.

In the course of visiting the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls on 25 January 1959 to close the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Pope John XXIII surprised all by calling an ecumenical council to meet in Rome. He placed the need for internal Catholic renewal and the promotion of Christian unity at the heart of his vision for the Council. Fifty years on, the significance and appropriate reception of the events and texts of Vatican II are still matters of disputed interpretation. What cannot be denied, however, is that Vatican II was a pivotal moment for modern Catholicism, particularly manifest in the ecumenical shift embraced by the Council.

Vatican II: Catholic and Ecumenical

On the face of it, the assured place and character of ecumenical teaching at Vatican II is open to view. The Council marked Catholicism's formal entry into the ecumenical movement, and opened what is often perceived to be a golden age in ecumenical endeavour. It might, then, be assumed that all that is required is a straightforward exploration of the relationship between 'Catholicism and Ecumenism' in the two most relevant Vatican II documents: *Lumen gentium*, 'The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church' (*LG*) and *Unitatis*

redintegratio, 'The Decree on Ecumenism' (*UR*) (for Vatican II see also 'The Second Vatican Council' by Gavin D'Costa, this volume).

However, recent debates about the appropriate hermeneutics of Vatican II mean that identifying the precise significance of Vatican II vis-à-vis ecumenism is not that straightforward. One influential way of telling the story of modern Catholicism draws a sharp contrast between aspects of pre- and post-conciliar teaching and practice, emphasizing the freshness and greater appeal of the latter. Giuseppe Alberigo's monumental (p. 909) edited five-volume *History of Vatican II* is frequently regarded as the torchbearer for this rendition (Alberigo and Komonchak 1996–2004). This theme of contrast is pressed in a superficially similar but quite different direction in a telling of the tale associated with Marcel Lefebvre and his followers. Here, a claimed radical discontinuity between pre- and post-conciliar teaching is used to justify the outright rejection of the Council as a betrayal of Catholic tradition. In turn, reacting against both of these, another line of interpretation claims that Vatican II is correctly understood as being in such strict continuity with previous articulations of Catholic tradition as basically changes nothing (e.g. Marchetto 2010).

It is significant here that Joseph Ratzinger (1927–) as Cardinal Prefect of the CDF and again as Pope Benedict XVI consistently maintained that if we are to interpret properly the Vatican II documents and their significance then we need to think in terms of reform within the continuity of the tradition (Benedict XVI 2008). This dual emphasis on reform and continuity, on the freshness of conciliar teaching, and its deep if creative continuity with earlier formulations of Catholic tradition, is to be noted and welcomed. This is particularly so in relation to Vatican II teaching on ecumenism where we do appear to have clear contrast with pre-conciliar teaching—not necessarily contradiction, but certainly contrast.

Earlier we saw the way in which pre-conciliar teaching was marked by the keeping of a careful distance from the ecumenical movement. The contrast of tone and content is striking when set alongside *Lumen gentium* and *Unitatis redintegratio,* where the Council recognizes that 'some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church' (*UR* 3; also *LG* 8). From this a logical implication is drawn: 'To the extent that these elements are found in other Christian communities, the one Church of Christ is effectively present in them' (*UR* 3).

Furthermore, these ecclesial elements are regarded as being of significance for Catholicism itself and not simply for the status of the other traditions: first in as much as the divisions prevent Catholicism 'from attaining the fullness of catholicity proper to her' and so from expressing 'in actual life her full catholicity in all her bearings' (*UR* 4). Also recognized, however, is that some of these ecclesial elements may even have come to fuller flower in the other traditions than they have been able to do within Catholicism. In *UR* 4 we find: 'anything wrought by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can be a help to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian is never contrary to what genuinely belongs to the faith; indeed, it can always bring a deeper realiza-

tion of the mystery of Christ and the Church'. Pope John Paul II underlined this in his remarkable 1995 encyclical on ecumenism, *Ut unum sint*, referring to other Christian communities as places 'where certain features of the Christian mystery have at times been more effectively emphasized' (*Ut unum sint* 14).

In *Unitatis redintegratio* and *Lumen gentium* then, we find an emphasis on Catholicism's own need to learn, to be renewed, purified, and even reformed. *UR* 6 speaks of ecumenism as a 'renewal' (*renovatio*) and a 'continual reformation' (*perennis reformatio*) and *LG* 8 of the Church as being in a state of '*semper purificanda*', of (p. 910) always being purified. While communion with the Bishop of Rome continues here to be viewed as an essential aspect of the Church's unity, this is no longer conceived as a call to one-sided return but of growth on both sides and mutual journeying to a new relationship. Again in *UR* 4 we find, 'Their (Catholics) primary duty is to make a careful and honest appraisal of whatever needs to be done or renewed in the Catholic household itself'.

All of this provides useful perspective for interpreting the much-debated passage in *LG* 8 about the 'Church of Christ' subsisting in the Catholic Church. The first seven paragraphs of *Lumen gentium*, tracing the place of the Church in creation and salvation history, speak not explicitly of the Catholic Church but of the 'Church of Christ'. *LG* 8 provides the first specific mention of the Catholic Church. In contrast to the pre-conciliar statement of strict and exclusive identity between the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church, what we have is: 'This Church (i.e. the Church of Christ) constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church …'. Quite apart from the linguistic awkwardness that would otherwise ensue, all of the texts just reviewed clearly demonstrate that '*subsistit in*' cannot simply mean exclusive identity—'is' without qualification—given the repeated acknowledgement of there being real elements of the Church to be found out with the Catholic Church (see also 'The Church' by Paul McPartlan, this volume). The most recent official treatment of this complex subject is CDF 2002.

It would, however, be equally erroneous to claim that this freshness amounts to a relinquishing of the claim for the uniqueness of the Catholic Church. The texts of *LG* and *UR* are again quite clear that while there might be elements of the Church in the other traditions, something essential is also missing: 'our separated brethren, whether considered as individuals or as communities and churches, are not blessed with that unity which Jesus Christ wished to bestow on all those who through Him were born again into one body' (*UR* 3). Whereas, 'We believe that this unity subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose' (*UR* 4).

Catholicism is, then, best understood here as recognizing the dignity of other traditions and the real potential for appropriate Catholic learning from them, while also continuing to maintain Catholicism's own distinctiveness. (As an aside, it is worth noting that other traditions, analogously, also maintain their own ecclesial distinctiveness: Baptists, Orthodox, and Pentecostalists are three such cases.) As such, we have a good illustration in practice of the principle of 'reform in continuity'. This opens a way of reading *LG* 8 that genuinely allows for freshness, reform, and Catholic learning from other traditions, while

also holding to the principle that the mystical body has, as Avery Dulles paraphrases Pope Pius XII's 1943 encyclical *Mystici corporis*, 'full or substantive existence in the Catholic Church and nowhere else' (*Mystici corporis* 103 and 91; see also Dulles 2008: 28). This indicates that even a relatively cautious reading of the Vatican II documents needs to recognize that the Council opened a formal orientation to receptive ecumenical learning on Catholicism's behalf. For all its concern to maintain deep continuity with aspects of previous teaching, here there is clear recognition that Catholicism is engaged on a continuing story of reform, growth, and renewal that can be (p. 911) aided by learning from the particular flowerings of grace in the other traditions that can serve to enrich the catholicity of Catholicism itself (*UR* 4).

Lumen gentium specifically explores the unity and catholicity of the Church in terms not of strict uniformity but of a differentiated communion of local churches around the world, with differing cultures, customs, and practices, in structural and sacramental communion with the Bishop of Rome (*LG* 13). Indeed, Avery Dulles, drawing out the ecumenical implications of this, found the view of the redeemed unity of the Church as one of the 'reconciled diversity' explicitly advocated in *UR* 14–18 (see Dulles 1985: 21–24). The significant implications this holds for the health of Catholicism itself needs clear recognition, relating closely to issues such as collegiality, consultation, subsidiarity, and inculturation—all issues into which Catholicism has some way further to grow and mature.

Subsequent Achievements and Developments

In 1966 the SPCU was made a permanent office of the Roman Curia, subsequently renamed the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) in 1989. Given the relative tardiness of Catholicism's entrance upon the ecumenical stage, the range and level of activity in the years following was quite staggering, prompting in some high hopes for realizable Christian unity in the foreseeable future.

The year 1966 also witnessed the inaugural meeting of a Joint Working Group between the Catholic Church and the WCC, followed, two years later, by full Catholic membership of the Faith and Order Commission. Consequently, the SPCU embarked upon a wide range of bilateral dialogues, aimed at promoting increased mutual understanding and seeking ways to overcome historic disagreements. The first of these was initiated with the Lutheran World Federation in 1965, eventually leading to the formal issuing in 1999 of the historic *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (discussed in more detail later). Similar dialogues began in 1966 with the Anglican Communion (following the historic visit of Archbishop Michael Ramsey to Rome), the World Methodist Council, the Old Catholic Churches and, in 1968, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Subsequent dialogues were also instituted with Pentecostals in 1972, the Orthodox in 1979, the Baptist World Alliance in 1984, and the World Evangelical Fellowship in 1993.

These dialogues have issued in impressive series of documents; of particular significance for Anglophone contexts are those emanating from the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). Here, consistently, the concern has not simply been to find

ways of reconciling differing emphases traditionally regarded as incompatible, but to ask how respective approaches challenge the other to fresh learning. Reflecting something also of this, the 2006 document of the Joint (p. 912) International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Catholic Church, *The Grace Given You in Christ: Catholics and Methodists Reflect Further on the Church*, focuses less on articulating an agreed theology of the Church and more on identifying the particular gifts each can fruitfully receive from the other, in service both of their respective flourishing and the path to future reconciliation.

The SPCU/PCPCU has itself also produced a considerable number of documents providing norms for local initiatives and practice. Amongst the most important are: the two-part *Directory Concerning Ecumenical Matters* (1967 and 1970); a 1975 document concerning *Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National and Local Levels*; and the 1993 revised *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Ecumenism*, updated to reflect the 1983 new *Code of Canon Law*.

Without question, however, the single most important Catholic document pertaining to ecumenism since the promulgation of *Unitatis redintegratio* in 1964 is Pope John Paul II's 1995 encyclical *Ut unum sint*, 'On Commitment to Ecumenism,' in the course of which he extended a remarkable invitation to theologians and leaders of other Christian traditions to help reimagine the papacy so that it might once again become the focus for Christian unity rather than a continuing cause of division (*Ut unum sint*, 95–6). Here we have clear, prophetic expression of the courageous commitment to the conversion of one's own tradition that is necessary if the churches are really to progress beyond friendship to the full catholicity of the one Church of Christ.

To give an example of the creative form of some of these documents, it will be helpful to consider the Catholic-Lutheran 'Joint Declaration' in a little more detail (see also Murray 2010). The document proceeds not by stating only one approach to each question at issue. Rather, after the customary preamble and a fairly extensive treatment of the relevant scriptural material, the document then places in Trinitarian context one fundamental theological point:

> In faith we together hold the conviction that justification is the work of the triune God. The Father sent his Son into the world to save sinners. The foundation and presupposition of justification is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ. Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works
>
> (*Joint Declaration*, 15).

On the basis of this common confession, the *Declaration* then outlines an approach to each substantive question by making, first, a precise common fundamental confession and then discussing, in turn, what Catholic and Lutheran traditions emphasize in their preferred language and conceptuality. An example will be helpful. First, we find:

(p. 913)

> We confess together that all persons depend completely on the saving grace of God for their salvation. The freedom they possess in relation to persons and the things of this world is no freedom in relation to salvation, for as sinners they stand under God's judgement and are incapable of turning by themselves to God to seek deliverance, of meriting their justification before God, or of attaining salvation by their own abilities. Justification takes place solely by God's grace
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> (*Joint Declaration*, 19).

And, then, we find this expanded as follows:

> Because Catholics and Lutherans confess this together, it is true to say:
>
> 20. When Catholics say that persons 'cooperate' in preparing for and accepting justification by consenting to God's justifying action, they see such personal consent as itself an effect of grace, not as an action arising from innate human abilities.
>
> 21. According to Lutheran teaching, human beings are incapable of cooperating in their salvation, because as sinners they actively oppose God and his saving action. Lutherans do not deny that a person can reject the working of grace. When they emphasize that a person can only receive (mere passive) justification, they mean thereby to exclude any possibility of contributing to one's own justification, but do not deny that believers are fully involved personally in their faith, which is effected by God's Word
>
> (*Joint Declaration*, 20–1).

This careful phrasing of different approaches is further bolstered by an extensive appendix to the whole Declaration which provides key extracts from some of the previously produced resource documents. The style of the document thus reflects beliefs about the nature of the dialogue that has been conducted. Neither tradition commits to abandoning its particular emphases or language; both commit to a common interpretive framework for those emphases and that language.

It is, however, in this careful attention to language that both the promise and the controversial nature of its approach lie. While the document was prepared over many years and was ultimately signed after extremely high-level negotiations between and among its signatories, it has been met with a very wide range of responses. At one level it must be accounted a success. In 2006 the World Methodist Council formally endorsed the document,

in 2016 the Anglican Consultative Council did likewise, and in 2017 the World Communion of Reformed Churches also endorsed the document. While these endorsements do not necessarily have significant effects within the life of local church communities, they do represent institutional recognition that significant work has been done on a central theological dispute between the Western Christian traditions.

At the same time, a number of parties have found it inadequate. In the United States, for example, Missouri and Wisconsin Lutheran Synods have both refused to endorse the document. For many theologians belonging to those communities this document's balancing act fails a priori because the Catholic Church assumes that the teachings of the Council of Trent remain in force. If so, and if the traditional Lutheran opposition (p. 914) to those teachings is real, what can be accomplished by the document's juggling act? In these inter-Lutheran disputes we see very clearly how much any ecumenical document involves not simply an agreement between two parties, but also a negotiation within the conversation represented by any particular Christian communion.

On the Catholic side, a number of commentators have seen the claims made for it as something of an overreach (e.g. Malloy 2001. For cautious endorsement see Dulles 2002, and for discussion of problems and possibilities prior to the document DiNoia 1997). For example, the charge has been made that the document largely avoids significant technical questions about the change that baptism effects and the transforming reality of grace in Catholic tradition. Once again, we see that documents such as this also represent negotiations within ongoing conversations among Catholic theologians. While the text might seem an endpoint of a particular series of conversations, it is in reality a way station in a continuing conversation. Reference back to the document in the context of various events and ceremonies marking the 500th anniversary of 1517 show ways in which it has shaped subsequent conversation, even if the path forward from the document remains obscure.

Contemporary Challenges

Despite the real progress achieved since Vatican II, the earlier hope for ecumenical endeavour has now given way, for a variety of reasons, to a widespread sense of tiredness, disappointment, and even disinterestedness. Significant here was the perhaps unrealistic and excessively optimistic character of some earlier expectations of realizable unity within a generation. But there is more to this than simply the disappointing and maturing of youthful enthusiasm.

In the Catholic world many felt disappointment at the cautious official reception sometimes given to the fruits of dialogue processes. This was particularly so in relation to the somewhat negative judgement of the CDF on the first phase of ARCIC's work. For those who felt thus, the CDF's criticisms betrayed a misunderstanding of the dialogue process, the purpose of which had not been to enable Anglican participants to arrive at a point of agreement with traditional Catholic formula but for both parties, having come to understand each other's respective emphases and modes of expression more adequately, to find appropriate ways of giving fresh joint expression to a faith essentially held in common.

Read charitably, however, the CDF's concern was that the appearance of unity should not be won at the cost of an ambiguity that simply confused underlying substantial differences. Allied with this was a concern also for consistency across the various bilateral agreements and, more recently, a concern that dialogue partners should not take unilateral action in relation to significant fresh developments (e.g. women's ordination) that cannot be approved by all.

From the perspective of formal Catholic teaching, decisions within many Anglican provinces in favour of women's ordination and, more recently, divergent teaching and (p. 915) pastoral policy concerning people of homosexual orientation, represent ecumenical 'game changers'—and this regardless of the de facto diversity of Catholic opinion on the ground in relation to these matters across the Church. This changed situation suggests the need for a corresponding change of strategy if any further progress is to be possible. In the previous phases of ARCIC's work, for example, it was realistic to hope that it might be possible to achieve reconciled understanding of the matters under discussion through a combination of: clarifying misunderstandings; utilizing fresh scholarly insights; and allowing for legitimately diverse expressions. Such a hope is, however, now not possible in relation to real substantive differences at the formal level; differences that are going to remain in being for the foreseeable future (see Murray 2015)

Finally, for many committed Christians, the contemporary waning of belief in the likelihood of full structural and sacramental communion being possible in the near term comes out of a frustration with the slowness of official processes compared with the urgent need for convincing shared witness on the ground. Within the WCC under the leadership of Konrad Raiser, something like this came to formal expression in a shift from Faith and Order matters to a focus on shared mission and evangelization (Life and Works) and, with this, the view that the structurally distinct yet associational character of the WCC itself provides appropriate and sufficient representation of the unity in diversity and universal catholicity of the Church of Christ.

All of these factors raise complex problems for Catholic ecumenists. Given its understanding of the need to settle for nothing less than full sacramental communion, Catholicism cannot downsize the ecumenical aspiration to one of mere 'reconciled diversity without structural unity'. But the traditional ways of working towards such full communion now appear blocked. The remainder of this chapter considers one new strategy for future ecumenical work: the approach of 'Receptive Ecumenism' as it has been used in the context of the ongoing ARCIC consultations (see ARCIC III 2018).

Receptive Ecumenism: a Way Forwards for Contemporary Ecumenism

Building on the openness to receptive learning found increasingly strongly in the ARCIC documents, recent Methodist-Catholic statements, and Pope John Paul II's *Ut Unum Sint*, Receptive Ecumenism prioritizes the self-critical question as to what, in any given situa-

tion, one's own tradition can appropriately learn from the other traditions (see Murray 2008a, 2008b, 2014, and 2018). As Joseph Ratzinger put it, it is 'a question of continually learning afresh from the other as other while respecting his or her otherness' (Ratzinger 1986: 140). The conviction is that if all were pursuing this question then all would be moving, albeit somewhat unpredictably, to places where more might become possible than appears so to be the case at present. It provides a way of long-term, hope-filled conversion rather than immediate convergence.

(p. 916) Receptive Ecumenism views the present interim situation less as a problematic derailment of the ecumenical agenda, and more as a crucial learning opportunity in which the churches can learn to progress towards their calling and destiny in the only way possible—by slow maturation in face of the challenges and gifts of the other. And as with all real progress in the way of conversion, it is viewed not as diminishment and loss—not as a matter of becoming *less* Catholic—but of growth and enrichment; a matter of becoming *more* Catholic precisely through appropriate expansive learning from Methodism, Anglicanism, and Orthodoxy etc.

Here in a nutshell is both the challenge and the promise of ecumenism for contemporary Catholicism. On the one hand, Catholicism's greatest ecumenical gift lies in its potential for holding a rich and full catholic diversity within a unity of communion with the Bishop of Rome. On the other hand, for this catholicity to be released and realized in a manner genuinely appealing to other traditions, Catholicism itself first needs to receive of the particular gifts of such traditions. For the sake of its own further flourishing, for the sake of its own sacramentality and witness, and for the sake of the ecumenical future, Catholicism needs have the courage, the creativity, and the humility to attend earnestly to discerning and following the Lord's call to further growth into the full manifestation of catholicity as variously mediated by the other Christian traditions.

Suggested Reading

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Catholicism and Ecumenism

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Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter charts the history of the Roman Catholic Church's relations with the various Orthodox Churches of the Christian East. It examines examples of communion or unity among these churches, as well as formal breaks in communion or schisms, and attempts at ecclesial reunion and ecumenical dialogue. Mention is made of the early roots of modern Orthodox ecumenism, along with the complementarities and differences between Catholicism and Orthodoxy. It also analyses the impact of the Second Vatican Council called by Pope John XXIII on Catholic–Orthodox relations. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the current state of Orthodox–Catholic ecumenical dialogue, paying attention to areas of doctrinal complementarity and convergence as well as possible avenues for fruitful dialogue.

Keywords: Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Second Vatican Council, communion, schisms, ecumenical dialogue, ecumenism

ONE could evoke a number of images to describe the relations between the Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church since the twentieth century. The modern ecumenical dialogue between these churches has described itself as a 'dialogue of love', while Pope John Paul II often spoke of the Church needing to breathe with 'both lungs of East and West' or of these churches being 'sister Churches' (*Ut unum sint* 56, 54). This chapter describes the various Orthodox Churches of the Christian East and provides a brief overview of their modern relations with the Catholic Church. The chapter will end with a synopsis of the current state of Orthodox–Catholic ecumenical dialogue, highlighting areas of doctrinal complementarity and convergence, while noting possible areas for fruitful dialogue.

Describing the Roman Catholic Church is perhaps somewhat simpler than describing the Eastern Christian Churches. One can refer to the doctrines, worship, and spirituality, ecclesial ministries, institutional structures, and papacy to paint a holistic picture of the Roman Catholic Church. For the Eastern Christian Churches, however, the reality is much more nuanced since one cannot simply aggregate them into a monolithic entity that exists in a diversity of cultures. The Eastern Christian Churches can be distinguished according

to three main ecclesial traditions or families: the Church of the East, the Oriental Orthodox Church, and the Eastern Orthodox Church (for a description of each of these churches, statistics, and hierarchs, one can consult Roberson 2008). One can also speak more broadly about Eastern Christianity, in which one would include Eastern Catholic Churches, many of which have their historic origins in the preceding Orthodox Churches. Among Eastern Christians there are seven distinct liturgical and spiritual traditions: Armenian; Byzantine; Coptic; East Syrian (or Mesopotamian); Ethiopic; West Syrian (or Syro-Antiochian); and Maronite. Despite many similarities and some theological and liturgical influences from one another, each has had its own unique historical development. In terms of their hierarchies, these churches all possess almost identical ecclesial ministries (bishops, priests, deacons) and (p. 920) structures. Each Orthodox Church in each of the three traditions exists as an autonomous (autocephalous) entity—with a primate (a patriarch, pope, or catholicos), a synod of bishops, monastic communities, and lay organizations—which is in full communion with other churches within the same Orthodox ecclesial family. They are largely mono-ethnic, apart from the Byzantine Churches which include the Albanian, Georgian, Greek, Hungarian, Melkite or Arab, Romanian, and Slavic (e.g. Ukrainian, Russian, Slovak) Churches.

Without going into a detailed historical excursus about each of the Orthodox Churches, one must look back into early Christianity to see how each tradition, alongside that of the Latin tradition, developed. Historically, one can find many examples of communion or unity among these churches, but one can also find a number of formal breaks in communion or schisms. One major break in ecclesial communion originated at the Council of Ephesus (AD 431), and involved the Church of the East. Another was caused by the events of the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), and saw a break in communion involving the churches of Oriental Orthodoxy. And finally, even though AD 1054 is often spoken of as the formal schism between the West and East, there have also existed other events, before and after, that signalled ruptures in communion. Among the reasons for division, some of which can not be characterized as formal schism, but as periods of mutual estrangement, one can cite political, cultural, as well as doctrinal reasons (for many examples see Congar 1978). The history of relations between East and West, nevertheless, saw numerous attempts at ecclesial reunion (such as the councils of Lyons in 1204 or Florence in 1439) and ecumenical dialogue up to modern times. Some of these union attempts resulted in the birth of the Eastern Catholic Churches.

Eastern Catholics—Rites and Churches

The Eastern Catholic Churches constitute distinct churches of the Catholic Church, so much so that they cannot be identified as Roman Catholic or being of the Roman/Latin rite (for reflections on the spirituality, liturgy, and theology of the Eastern Catholic Churches see Chirovsky 1998; Galadza 1998; Taft 1998; Tataryn 1998). Each of these churches had unique origins, beginning in the sixteenth century, when some Orthodox Churches began entering into communion with Rome. Within the Catholic Church there are four groupings of Eastern Catholics, three of which correspond to the three major tra-

ditions of Orthodoxy mentioned earlier (i.e. the Church of the East, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Orthodox). Virtually all these Orthodox Churches have an Eastern Catholic Church that emerged out of them. A small minority of Eastern Catholic Churches were simply created unilaterally by the Roman Church (like the Maronites).

For whatever historical reasons for entering into union with Rome, these churches were allowed to preserve their ecclesial identities, and to not simply become Latin (p. 921) or Roman. One often hears them referred to as 'rites,' such as the 'Ukrainian rite' or 'Byzantine rite', which would be appropriate in referring specifically to their liturgical ('ritual') traditions. However, these distinct communities are more than rites. They are indeed churches since their identities cannot be narrowed down solely to a 'rite', in the same way that one cannot simply describe a Roman Catholic by only referring to him/her as belonging to the 'Roman (Latin) rite'. Each Eastern Catholic Church is considered an *ecclesia sui iuris* ('of its own law') or a *ecclesia particularis* (particular church) with its own spiritual, liturgical, and canonical traditions, and functioning somewhat akin to the autonomous (autocephalous) Orthodox Churches. All these Eastern Catholic Churches have a synodal structure with their own hierarchy and primate, and govern themselves according to their own norms and according to the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* (promulgated 1990). There is likewise a great similarity in liturgical and spiritual life between the Orthodox and their Eastern Catholic counterparts, where some differences would be found in the liturgical diptychs (prayers of commemoration), and perhaps in certain latinizations that have either been imposed on Eastern Catholics (for example, historical prohibitions on married clergy, limitations on ecclesial jurisdictions) or assimilated willingly by them (for example the rosary, Stations of the Cross). As John Paul II stressed in *Orientalium lumen* (1995) and *Ut unum sint* (1995), the Eastern Christian Churches are a treasury and integral part of Christ's Church. This spirit permeates the Catholic Church's attitude to its sister Churches of the Christian East. However, the Catholic Church's treatment of Eastern Christians, both Catholic and Orthodox, has not been without its historical challenges and difficulties.

The Roman Catholic Church and Early Ecumenism

The modern period of relations between East and West, of the last century, can be described as a conversion in attitudes caused by a number of catalysts that led to rapprochement. In the mid-nineteenth century, Pope Puis IX wrote an epistle to the Orthodox Churches (1848) exhorting them to return to union with Rome, which offended the East in its content and manner of promulgation. The Orthodox Churches responded with their own epistle, equally unecumenical. Vatican I (1869–70) also saw a similar disregard for the Christian East. It would not be until Pope Leo XIII (Pope AD 1878–1903) that one would see a greater warming in the Roman Catholic Church's attitudes to the Eastern Churches through his apostolic letters *Praeclara gratulationis publicae* (1894) and *Orientalium dignitas* (1894). The latter letter exhorted the nurturing and preservation of the

Eastern Catholic Churches and of their heritage and guarded against attempts at latinization. Despite such positive progress, Pope Pius X's apostolic letter *Ea semper* (1907), on Eastern Catholics in the diaspora, caused significant dissatisfaction among Eastern Catholics since it made Eastern Catholic bishops auxiliaries of Roman Catholic (p. 922) bishops, denied priests the right to chrismate (confirm) their own faithful, and imposed clerical celibacy. This caused a number of Eastern Catholic faithful and churches to break communion with Rome, and enter into communion with the Orthodox Church (for a history of this in North America see Fitzgerald 1995). Nevertheless, the spirit of Pope Leo XIII's epistles eventually led to the establishment in 1917 of a Congregation for the Oriental (Eastern) Church by Pope Benedict XV (Pope AD 1914–22), and then the founding of the Pontifical Oriental Institute. This was still a period when the Roman Church was not formally involved in ecumenical relations on the scale that gave birth to the modern ecumenical initiatives of the 1920s and 1930s (of Faith and Order, and later with the World Council of Churches in 1948). After the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI renamed the Congregation for the Oriental (Eastern) Church, the Congregation for the Oriental (Eastern) Churches.

The Orthodox Churches and Early Ecumenism

The early roots of modern Orthodox ecumenism can be traced back to 1902, with the encyclical to the Eastern Orthodox Churches of Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople (1878-84 and 1901-12). It endeavoured to develop a consensus on relations with the Roman Church and Protestants. This was followed in 1920 by another encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, *Unto the Churches of Christ Everywhere*. The encyclical is considered a pivotal document in modern Orthodoxy's rapprochement with non-Orthodox Churches. A further encyclical, in 1952, by Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople (1948-72) framed the Eastern Orthodox Church's involvement in the World Council of Churches (WCC), and had important implications for future relations with the Roman Catholic Church.

On the eve of the Second Vatican Council, the Eastern Orthodox Churches were preparing for their first Pan-Orthodox Synod. The acts of the First Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (1961) included resolutions encouraging dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches towards a view to friendlier relations and cooperation. As for the Roman Catholics, this synod resolved to study the complementarities and differences between Catholicism and Orthodoxy (in faith, administration, in church activities, notably proselytism and uniatism--a term which signifies the coerced union of one church into another church), and the cultivation of relations in the spirit of Christian love. In attendance at this conference were representatives of the Catholic Church, such as Pierre Duprey, who would later play a central role in bringing together Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I during Vatican II. Subsequent Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conferences (in 1963 and 1964) affirmed that the Orthodox Church could participate in ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church, provided that the dialogue was on the grounds that they were equals. (p. 923) Further pan-Orthodox consultations culminated in

the convocation of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, June 2016). Manifesting inter-Orthodox conflicts over ecumenism, canonical territory and authority in the Church, the churches of Antioch, Georgia, Bulgaria and Russia did not attend. The Council's document, 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World,' affirmed the importance of respectful ecumenical dialogue while rejecting proselytism and uniatism. Unlike Vatican II's numerous favourable references to the Orthodox churches, there is no explicit mention in the pan-Orthodox Council documents of the Roman Catholic Church, nor of its being a 'sister church'.

The Watershed Era—Vatican II

A watershed moment for the Roman Catholic Church was the calling of the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII. This period witnessed the historic invitation of Orthodox observers to the council, and eventually a 1964 meeting between Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in the Holy Land. The council, and later exchanges between the pope and patriarch, saw the revival of the tradition of sending Easter greetings to each other (for documentation see Stormon 1987). In 1964, a highly revered relic in Orthodoxy, the head of the Apostle Andrew, was returned by the Vatican to Greece. This warming of relations included, after 1967, the reciprocal visits by official delegations of the pope and patriarch for the patronal feasts of each other's sees.

The council promulgated three important texts dealing with the Christian East: *Lumen gentium* (On the church), *Unitatis redintegratio* (On ecumenism), and *Orientalium ecclesiarum* (On Eastern Catholics). All of these texts, in one way or another, contain numerous positive affirmations of Eastern Christianity by the council.

For the Orthodox, the memory of Vatican I (1869–70), its definition of papal infallibility, and issues of papal jurisdiction were fresh in their minds. Certainly *Lumen gentium*'s affirmations on the mystery of the Church, as a sacrament of communion with God and humanity, were welcomed by Orthodoxy. This dogmatic constitution's description of the Church as the People of God and Body of Christ, of its visible and invisible dimensions, of its holiness and its need for conversion and repentance, finds echoes in Orthodox communion ecclesiology. The constitution speaks of the college of bishops, whose visible head is the pope, and that the Church is a community of particular or local churches (*LG* 22–23). A symbiosis exists between the local and universal Church, and each local church contributes to the catholicity of the Church. Two issues that garnered some objections in the East were the constitution's statements that the Church of Christ 'subsists in' (*subsistit in*) the Catholic Church and that 'many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside [the Catholic Church's] visible confines' (*LG* 8) since these implied that the Orthodox Churches were somehow lesser or imperfect embodiments of the one Church of Christ.

(p. 924) *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the council's decree on ecumenism, builds on *Lumen gentium's* ecclesiology, but does not describe ecclesial unity as simply a return to the Catholic Church. As in *Lumen gentium*, this decree once again affirms that the Church of

Christ ‘subsists in’ the Catholic Church (*UR* 4), and that elements of truth and sanctification exist outside the Catholic Church’s visible boundaries. The decree affirms that ecclesial division is contrary to the will of Christ, is a scandal to the world, and hampers the proclamation of the Gospel (*UR* 1). Unity in Christ is both signified and brought about by a common participation in the Eucharist, and fostered by the Holy Spirit (*UR* 2). This is all modelled on the unity that exists in the Triune God. The decree affirms that there exist communities which are separated from full communion with the Catholic Church with faithful who, through baptism, still share in an imperfect communion with the Catholic Church (*UR* 3). The decree nevertheless describes such churches or communities as suffering from defects.

The decree treats in a special manner the divisions between East and West (*UR* 1), recognizing the breaks in communion that resulted during the early councils or later between the Eastern patriarchates and the Roman See (*UR* 13). The patriarchates are singled out as holding first place among such Eastern Churches. These Eastern Churches have sought to preserve communion in faith and charity as if between ‘sister’ churches (*UR* 14). These churches build communion with God and with each other through the celebration of the Eucharist, whereby the Church of God is built up among them (*UR* 14). The document explicitly states:

> These churches, though separated from us, yet possess true sacraments, above all —by apostolic succession—the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy.
>
> (*UR* 14)

The text affirms the possibility of *communicatio in sacris* (a sharing in the sacraments) with the separated Eastern Churches. As in *Lumen gentium*, the monastic and spiritual traditions of the East are recognized for their influences on the West. Since each of these churches has followed its own disciplines and traditions, the council could affirm:

> Far from being an obstacle to the Church’s unity, such diversity of customs and observances only adds to her beauty and contributes greatly to carrying out her missions. … To remove all shadow of doubt, then, this holy Synod solemnly declares that the Churches of the East, while keeping in mind the necessary unity of the whole Church, have the power to govern themselves according to their own disciplines, since these are better suited to the character of their faithful and better adapted to the good of souls. The perfect observance of this traditional principle—which has not always been observed—is a prerequisite to any restoration of union.
>
> (*UR* 16)

This section on the East ends with an affirmation that Eastern Catholics preserve this Eastern heritage and are already ‘living in full communion with their brethren in the West’ (*UR* 16).

(p. 925) This theme of Eastern Catholics, and the recognition of the special status of the Christian East, is continued in the decree *Orientalium ecclesiarum*. The document insists on the dignity and equality of the Eastern rites and particular or local churches, and it supports the development of the Eastern tradition in its diverse manifestations. Each such church has the obligation to spread the gospel and to establish hierarchies where necessary (*OE* 4–5). Each of these churches is 'equally entrusted to the pastoral guidance of the Roman Pontiff, who by God's appointment is successor to the Blessed Peter in primacy over the universal church' (*OE* 3). All Eastern Catholic Churches have the same rights and obligations 'under the direction of the Roman Pontiff' (*OE* 3), and the right and duty to govern themselves according to their own disciplines (*OE* 5). They ought to preserve their liturgical rites and ways of life, and to adapt to various needs in order to do so. The decree recognizes the importance of patriarchates (or major archbishoprics) in the governance of churches, though adding that such governance is carried out 'without prejudice to the primacy of the Roman Pontiff' (*OE* 7). The patriarchates and their synods are the highest authority in these Eastern Churches, and have the rights of establishing new eparchies and appointing new bishops 'in their own territories', again adding a phrase 'without prejudice to the inalienable right of the Roman Pontiff to intervene in any particular case' (*OE* 9). New patriarchates should be established where there is a need (*OE* 11). The decree also affirms the importance of the sacramental and liturgical disciplines of these churches (*OE* 12–23), and that *communicatio in sacris* is permitted between these Eastern Catholics and separated Eastern Christians (*OE* 26–29; intercommunion is generally not practised by Orthodox Churches unless both churches are in full communion with each other).

The promulgation of these three main council documents eventually led in 1965 to the mutual nullification of the anathemas of AD 1054 by Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I. This represented an ecumenically significant moment in the relations between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and precipitated the formal establishment of an ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches.

Modern Orthodox–Catholic Dialogue

In 1975, on the tenth anniversary of the nullification of the anathemas, Metropolitan Meliton (who was present at Vatican II as a representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate) announced that the Orthodox Churches were inaugurating a theological dialogue with the Catholic Church. This was followed by meetings of preparatory commissions and committees, from 1976 to 1978, that produced an agenda for the official meetings of the 'dialogue of love' whose goal was the establishment of full communion. On the insistence of the Orthodox Church, the dialogue should begin with areas in which the two churches were in basic agreement, rather than concentrating on issues of disagreement, as the Catholics had proposed. It was hoped that this would provide (p. 926) an opportunity for seeing areas of disagreement as being complementary rather than contradictory. The plan of the first dialogues was to deal with the Church, sacraments, and ministry in the

Church, which eventually resulted in the production of six agreed statements between 1982 and 2016 (for these documents see Borelli and Erickson 1996).

The first agreed statement, ‘The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity’ (1982), is rooted in the Church’s experience of the Christ event. Christ is the one who conquers sin and death and brings about the possibility of salvation, and who inaugurates the kingdom of God. This salvation is given as a foretaste in the Eucharist. In the Pentecost event, the Spirit continually fashions and builds the Church into the body of Christ. The Church, participating in the Eucharist, where believers unite themselves to Christ in an offering to the Father in the Spirit, makes of the Church a communion of persons in Christ and, more centrally, a sacrament of the Trinitarian communion. This Trinitarian communion is at the foundation of the Church, which is visibly manifested in the celebration of the Eucharist. Here we see the nature of the Church as part of the economy of salvation yet having an eschatological destiny. Such an ecclesiology of communion also makes the Church both a local and universal reality, and its catholicity depends on its communion with other local churches. The local church, centred on the celebration of the Eucharist presided over by a bishop, or presbyter in communion with him, is a Church in the fullest sense. However, it must visibly manifest such fullness in its being in communion with other churches as ‘sister Churches’. This communion presupposes unity in the same faith, but also a will for communion in love and in service.

The next agreed statement, ‘Faith, Sacraments and the Unity of the Church’ (1987) develops these earlier statements on the Eucharist in connection with baptism and chrismation (confirmation). Sacraments are seen as conferring the grace of the Spirit as signs of God’s accomplishment, of what God is effecting, and as signs that anticipate the eschatological fulfilment of the economy of salvation. The centrality of worship for the life of the Church is affirmed in the document, and the text continues with the theme of the roles of Christ and the Spirit in the building up of the Church and communion. The agreed statement recognizes that there have been a diversity of practices and expressions of the faith in the worship of the East and West, but these should be seen as complementary rather than as divisive. The document also relates the sacramental life to the role of the ordained ministry, particularly to that of the role of the bishop, in fostering communion, and develops some common language around the role of synods and ecumenical councils in preserving or defining the faith (as in the formulation of the Nicene–Constantinopolitan Creed).

The third agreed statement, on the ‘Sacrament of Order in the Sacramental Structure of the Church with Particular Reference to the Importance of Apostolic Succession for the Sanctification and Unity of the People of God’ (1988), continues with the same foundational principles of the role of Christ and the Spirit in building up the Church, and leading persons to lives of holiness. The theme of communion ecclesiology, of the Church’s celebration of the Eucharist centred around the bishop, is also continued, with further affirmations expressing the synodal and conciliar life of the Church. The (p. 927) episcopacy is located within the apostolicity of the Church, since the latter is another dimension of

communion. The document touches on the topic of primacy, in terms of the Orthodox patriarchates and the historical development of the pentarchy (of the five major patriarchates: Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem), but does not proceed to a discussion of papal primacy, nor does it deal extensively with primacies within Orthodoxy itself. Primacy and conciliarity were to be the topics of subsequent consultations, that is, until the fall of the Soviet Union precipitated a period of critical relations between the Orthodox Churches and Catholic Church.

The emergence of Eastern Catholic Churches from the underground in the former Soviet Union in 1991, after years of persecution and suppression by the Soviet communist regime, sparked a crisis in Orthodox–Catholic relations. The Orthodox Churches have traditionally viewed the existence of the Eastern Catholic Churches as being created out of a process of coerced ecclesial unions or proselytism. They also reject the notion that Eastern Catholic Churches can be ‘bridge’ churches leading the East back to union under Rome. ‘Uniatism’ as a term thus comes from how the Orthodox negatively perceive the processes by which Eastern Churches entered into ‘union’ with Rome. Historically these churches were referred to as Uniates, but the term has come to have pejorative connotations in modern times. The emergence from the underground of these Eastern Catholic Churches led to some of these communities reclaiming church buildings that were forcibly taken from them during the Soviet era. This unsurprisingly caused obvious conflicts with the Russian Orthodox Church. Alongside this, the Catholic Church began establishing new hierarchies in the territories of the former Soviet Union to serve the pastoral needs of its faithful. The latter was seen as an incursion into the traditional territories of the Russian Orthodox Church, and as an act of proselytism (alongside of the activities of other western Protestant communities. Even among the Orthodox Church, however, there exist disputes over territorial jurisdiction, both in their own historic territories and in new lands or émigré communities). Accusations of violence between Eastern Catholics and Orthodox over church and monastery ownership added to the friction between the Catholic Church and Orthodox Churches.

Eventually, the Orthodox–Catholic dialogue produced ‘Uniatism: Method of Union in the Past and the Present Search for Full Communion’ (1993). The agreed statement explicitly rejected uniatism ‘as a method for the search for unity because it is opposed to the common tradition of both [Orthodox and Catholic] churches’ (2). This was coupled, however, with an affirmation that the Eastern Catholic Churches ‘have a right to exist and to act in answer to the spiritual needs of their faithful’ (3). The document states that where there is a need for pastoral activity by Catholics in the traditional territories of the Orthodox Churches, then consultation and collaboration should be pursued in order to avoid accusations of proselytism or uniatism (29). This was coupled with an explicit rejection of all forms of violence, and an affirmation also of religious freedom. Any past historic actions that resulted in hurt or injustice were to be seen in a spirit of forgiveness towards a healing of memories in order for the ‘dialogue of love’ to continue. Despite this document’s promulgation, the tensions surrounding the pastoral activities of the Catholic Church in Eastern Europe, but particularly that of the Eastern Catholic (p. 928) Churches, has continued to be a source of friction between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Remarkably though,

in émigré communities (in Europe and North America) during the same period, one would have noticed a spirit of peaceful coexistence and even of participation in some common worship services.

In 2007, the Orthodox–Catholic consultation (Ravenna, Italy) produced ‘Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority’. The history of this document’s ratification came in the context of some lingering tensions surrounding the issue of uniatism. Adding to the tensions in the dialogue, the Russian Orthodox representatives walked out of the commission’s final meetings in protest over the presence of Estonian Orthodox representatives, whom they did not recognize canonically. The rest of the commission, nevertheless, did eventually release the 2007 statement. The agreement roots its understanding of authority in all members of Church, who bear the ‘conscience of the church’ or the ‘sense of faith,’ and who are responsible for the transmission and profession of their baptismal faith. The document, though, deals more with structures of authority and of communion within the Church, beginning with the local church, which manifests its faith and unity pre-eminently in the celebration of the Eucharist. Here the bishop becomes a centre of authority at the local level. Like the first agreed statement, this text affirms again that the catholicity of the local church must manifest itself in communion with other churches. This communion expresses the local dimensions of conciliarity and authority through each local church’s synods, councils, episcopal conferences, and primacies (of metropolitans, archbishops, or patriarchs). The document uses the language of a primatial ‘first’ or ‘head’ to affirm a centre of authority, who nevertheless cannot do anything without the consent of the others. And finally, since the Church is one and indivisible, there necessarily exists a level of communion at the universal level, which is manifest in an event of an ecumenical council and its reception by the faithful. Where the document does not delve further is on the exercise of the primacy of the bishop of Rome, which the consultation admits frankly is a point of disagreement between Orthodox and Catholics. Oddly enough, the text ends with the same affirmation from Vatican II, that the Church of Christ ‘subsists in’ the Catholic Church. This is coupled with an identical Orthodox affirmation of its self-understanding as the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

The brief agreed statement ‘Synodality and Primacy During the First Millennium: Towards a Common Understanding in Service to the Unity of the Church’ (2016) repeated previous themes about local, regional and universal primacies. The bishop (patriarch) of Rome possessed a primacy of honour among the five patriarchates but did not possess any canonical authority over the East. The next scheduled meeting will continue focusing on divergencies and complementarities in the exercise of primacies and synodality in the second millennium.

The inauguration of this international Orthodox–Catholic ecumenical dialogue has also led to other similar dialogues with the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Church of the East, and resulted in common declarations on Christological issues that historically have divided these churches and the Catholic Church. This is in addition to (p. 929) the establishment of similar inter-Orthodox dialogues among the churches of the three Orthodox

traditions. The Orthodox Churches and Catholic Church have also had occasion to dialogue with each other in the World Council of Churches and on the Faith and Order Commission, in addition to a number of national Orthodox–Catholic ecumenical dialogues, meetings or institutes (notably in North America and Europe).

Fruitful Dialogue

There remain other doctrinal issues between Orthodoxy and Catholicism that could benefit from further discussion on the path towards restoring full communion and alongside a healing of memories. Mary as Theotokos, or the Mother of God, occupies a central place in the spirituality and theology of each of the churches, and each attaches a high esteem or veneration to her, of her holiness and of her glorification. The East, however, has had some concerns with the manner of Catholicism's dogmatic definition of Mary's Assumption into Heaven, which the East celebrates as the Dormition, and the notion of original sin undergirding the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. The East's theological anthropology here tends to speak of the effects of the Fall as an inherited corruptibility and a weakening of the will, but would not speak of a transmission of original sin or inherited guilt. In this sense the personal dimension of sin is affirmed by the East, which prefers to speak of an ancestral or primordial sin. Future dialogue between East and West in the realm of soteriology could address issues associated with the nature of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, atonement, grace, conversion, and deification (or *theõsis*). The Catholic Church's teachings on purgatory would also have detractors in Orthodoxy, though the East and West would affirm the importance for prayers for and to the deceased, and the hope of resurrection and of eternal life for all of humanity.

The Catholic Marian dogmas, mentioned earlier, are related to the area of papal infallibility, which the Orthodox would say only properly belongs to an Ecumenical Council's teachings, but not to the person of the pope teaching *ex cathedra*. The *Filioque*, a traditional point of polemic between East and West, dealing with the West's addition to the Creed the belief that the 'Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son,' does no longer seem to be a point of contention. The Orthodox–Catholic dialogue has effectively affirmed that both churches ultimately agree that the procession of the Spirit is from a single source, of the Father, which is a belief that protects the unity or oneness of God. Mandatory clerical celibacy (for Catholics) and married clergy (for Orthodox and Eastern Catholics) does not seem to be a church-dividing issue either, although each would still hold that the ordained ministry is restricted to men. The pre-conciliar meetings towards the Pan-Orthodox Council have, nevertheless, touched on the topic of the reinstitution of the female diaconate. Where the dialogue between East and West could also bear fruit is in expressing common grounds on ethical issues; in ecological, social, and economic justice; on the persecution of Christians and other faith traditions; (p. 930) on interfaith dialogue; the importance of religious art or iconography, architecture, and sacred places; the centrality of prayer, spirituality, and liturgy in Christian life; and the call to evangelization as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches grow towards fuller communion.

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Catholic Theology and Other Religions

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter considers Catholic theology's response to non-Christian faiths. It argues that the 'theology of religions' is not a locus of theological reflection distinct from Christology or Trinitarian theology or others, but one that asks the questions in a particular context. At the same time, the theology of religions is an act of Christian discipleship, in which Christians encounter those of other faiths and reflect on how we may discern the work of the Spirit beyond the bounds of the visible Church. The chapter pursues this argument by considering the Second Vatican Council's Nostra aetate, the relationship between dialogue and mission, the phenomenon of 'comparative theology', and the relationship between dialogue and discipleship.

Keywords: other religions, dialogue, mission, discipleship, Karl Rahner, John Hick, Raimon Panikkar, Jacques Dupuis

IF theology is about the exercise of the religious intellect, then the task of theology of religions is to interpret Christian faith in generous yet critical dialogue with the phenomenon of human religiosity in all its wonder, complexity, and darkness. A properly Catholic theological rationality, sensitized to discern the workings of God's grace in a world already transformed by the Paschal Mystery, will seek to move beyond the familiar and to cross into what, strictly speaking, belongs to other communities and other cultures. At the same time, Catholic theology proposes its own account of truth which is not to be set alongside others as one vision among many nor turned into an all-encompassing metanarrative. A Catholic theology of religions is not, therefore, a discrete area of study such as Christology, soteriology, missiology, or the theology of creation, but it must include the questions they address or it would not be theological at all. As a critique of the religious cultures of the world, which seeks both to challenge and support their values, theology of religions belongs to a different order of discourse, with a number of facets which have yet to find a settled form. What holds them together is reflection on a Christian discipleship which, precisely because it is practised through encounter with other persons of faith,

seeks to learn how to discern the action of the Spirit beyond the bounds of the visible Church.

The issue of ‘other religions’ has been around for Catholic Christians since the ‘parting of the ways’ with the synagogue in the middle of the first century after Christ’s death. It was not, however, spelt out with any clarity until the Second Vatican Council when *Lumen gentium* referred to persons of other faiths being ‘orientated to’ or ‘related to’ the Church (*LG* 16). That vision of the single life-giving mystery of God’s love in which Christians and other people of faith participate together raises a number of questions. How is such a relationship to be maintained without occluding one or other side? What are the implications for the Church’s self-understanding of an anthropology that recognizes and fully appreciates the social and relational nature of human existence? Can one give a coherent account of such relationality without slipping into relativism?

(p. 932) One set of answers to these questions arises from the actual encounter with other persons of faith and the nature of dialogue. The other is more concerned with the theological principles necessary to prepare for and reflect on that encounter. Both are necessary. While some theologians can be said to work a posteriori, building ‘theology *of* dialogue’, others are more at home with an a priori approach, a ‘theology *for* dialogue’ (Barnes 2002). If Raimon Panikkar’s personal experience of living between cultures makes him the primary advocate of the former, Jacques Dupuis with his scrupulous concern to defend the credibility of the Catholic Church in a world of many faiths exemplifies the latter (both of these figures are discussed below). Here, however, I am less concerned with a survey of significant figures, or with the impact that interfaith dialogue has had on the refiguring of the classical themes of Catholic theology. I am concerned, rather with those underlying existential and largely practical issues—to do with justice, inculturation and spirituality, as well as interfaith encounter itself—which have challenged and enhanced the missionary sensibility of the Church. It is the nature of this sensibility—what may be called the ‘Catholic instinct’—that forms the main focus of this chapter.

Nostra Aetate and the Retrieval of the Jewish Matrix for Christian Theology

The declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions, *Nostra aetate* is the shortest document issued by the Second Vatican Council, at no more than thirty sentences in the Latin original. Most of these seem unremarkable. Beginning with questions that people ask about God and the nature of human existence, the text continues with brief references to Buddhism and Hinduism and longer reflections on the relationships between the Church and Muslims and Jews. Just one section remains as fresh and bold as the day it was written. Beginning with the unequivocal statement that the Church ‘rejects nothing of what is true and holy’ in other faiths, *Nostra Aetate* calls Christians to ‘acknowledge, preserve, and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, also their social life and culture’ (*NA* 2).

Those three powerful imperatives were not in the original draft, nor was any statement on other religions as a whole intended by the preparatory process for the council. *Nostra aetate* began life as an appendage to the schema on ecumenism. Eventually, and not without some drama, it assumed the status of a separate document. In its origins, however, it was intended to address the complex pathology of the Christian relationship with Judaism—a problem highlighted by the Jewish historian Jules Isaac in a famous visit to Pope John XXIII in 1960. Isaac reminded the pope of the Christian 'teaching of contempt' for the Jews. Pope John responded by asking Cardinal Bea to address the issue. The subsequent story of the formation of the text is tortuous, to say the least. What eventually emerged as a statement on non-Christian religions as a whole almost (p. 933) foundered at various points due more to political than theological factors. This very specific context, the 'Jewish matrix' for a theology of religions, is still to be discerned in a text that is pervaded—implicitly at any rate—by a theology of revelation, the topic of the Council's constitution *Dei Verbum*. No reference is made to the Fathers of the Church or to previous councils; there is only the scriptural record (drawing heavily on Paul's deeply felt meditation on the fate of his erstwhile co-religionists in Romans 9–11) which unfolds the narrative of God's loving and redemptive care for his people. Christians have usually seen this story in terms of a definitive fulfillment that abrogates the Sinai Covenant. The effect of *Nostra aetate*—with its reminder that the Jews 'remain very dear to God'—is to challenge any simplistic theory of the replacement of one community by another.

Nostra aetate's recovery of Paul's conviction that God is constant and does not forsake God's people has, since Vatican II, given way to a much deeper sense of the continuing validity of Judaism not just as Christianity's 'elder brother', but as a living and life-giving religious tradition in its own right. This has led to a marked change in the atmosphere in which the crucial questions can be asked: how can Christians give an account of Judaism that both avoids supersessionism and remains faithful to the conviction that in Christ, God has revealed a truth *for all people*? If the Sinai Covenant has not been revoked, is Christ of no significance to the Jews? More practically, how can the Old Testament be prayed and read by Christians with sensitivity to the fact that these texts are also, and more exactly, the canonical scriptures of another religious tradition? In general, the approach to such questions is to avoid a starkly contrastive account of Covenant theology in favour of formulations that seek out the continuities within the single mystery of God's creative *and* redemptive action in the world. This has been backed by a renewed awareness of the complexity of the biblical tradition, its many strands and intrinsic historicality, which has led to a reading of Christian origins as a movement within Judaism, or to be more precise, within that broad tradition of faith based on the Covenant of Sinai and the promises made to Abraham and the people of Israel. The challenge for Christian exegetes is to learn how to read the Bible alongside their Jewish counterparts—a challenge taken up in the influential movement known as Scriptural Reasoning.

In terms of a theology of the Jewish–Christian relationship, the emphasis is less on the newness or novelty of the Covenant than on its renewal in Christ whose own life as a faithful Torah-observant Jew points the way to the fullness of life in God. Torah and Christ are not to be set in opposition as lesser and greater sources of revelation but understood

as together witnessing to God's never-ending act of self-communication. That some tension between 'Old' and 'New' is built into the scriptural record, not to mention the continuing history of relations between Jews and Christians, is clear. However, the tension is not to be resolved by positing dual covenants, still less a series of discrete covenants with different communities of faith. Rather—as John McDade has argued, drawing on an insight of Karl Rahner—within the single covenant of God's act of self-communicating love in which Jews and Christians share can be discerned certain 'inner moments' that instantiate or reveal as historical reality the truth of God's creative presence (McDade 2007; Imhof and Biallowons 1982: 126).

(p. 934) This idea, with its deeply sacramental wisdom, that certain traces of the Spirit or what the early Church fathers referred to as 'seeds of the Word' are to be discerned within the graced experience of God's Church, has given a profound impetus to Catholic theology of religions. It does not follow, however, that the 'inner moments' model of the Jewish–Christian relationship can be invoked as a sort of interreligious template for all other relations. Each relationship is particular and exhibits its own characteristics that are not to be subsumed neatly within some overarching scheme. Rather what the renewal of the intrinsically theological relationship between Jews and Christians has done is sensitize the latter to the broader experience of existing in relationship with a variety of communities of faith. In such terms theology of religions emerges not just as a response to questions about the salvation of the non-Christian or the extent of God's grace but, more profoundly, as a reflection on what it means to be Church in a multifaith world and what is implied by an anthropology that fully appreciates the social and relational nature of human existence.

Dialogue and Mission

No single word expresses this sense of a Church that exists in irreducible relationship with the other than 'dialogue'. One strand of thought in the post-conciliar Church is to see dialogue in largely instrumentalist terms as a dimension of the Church's single evangelizing mission. Both John Paul II's *Redemptoris missio* and the influential 1991 study from the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue (*Dialogue and Proclamation*) are grappling with the claims of two interdependent sides of the Church's identity in a world dominated by a plurality of religions. As far as theology of religions is concerned, the most striking section in the latter document is that which develops a 'Christian Approach to Religious Traditions' (*Dialogue* 14–32). Jesus' open attitude to the other is given more than an exemplary status. It is seen to be intrinsically theological; that is to say, the mission Jesus receives from the Father becomes universal through his Resurrection from the dead, establishing a 'new sanctuary' for all people (*Dialogue* 21). This theme of the mystery of salvation in which all people of faith can be said to share, makes it clear that while salvation is always offered in Christ, in practice salvation comes to people through the sincere practice of their own traditions *and* through following their conscience (*Dialogue* 29). The second part of the document sets proclamation within the full extent of the Church's mission, namely Jesus' own mission expressed in words and works that are

signs of the Kingdom. It is, however, the Spirit who brings people to Christ (*Dialogue* 65). The Church needs to remember that others may already have been touched by God's Spirit in unknown ways.

A second strand of thought sees dialogue in more intrinsically theological terms. In the words of David Tracy, dialogue is not to be understood as a dimension of Christian praxis but as 'a religious experience' in its own right (Tracy 1990: 98). There is more to the Church's experience of dialogue than a pragmatic awareness of a 'new' method for (p. 935) evangelization. Paul VI is usually credited with bringing the term 'dialogue' into the theological lexicon of the Catholic Church. In his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam,* he speaks about the Church as a community committed to a mission for all humankind. The Church is intimately related to the world—indeed is identified precisely through its desire to communicate that truth which is Christ to the world. In the text the Latin word *colloquium* ('conversation') is translated as 'dialogue'—the same word used in *Nostra aetate* 2. This word, with its connotations of something less formal than 'dialogue', is given a specifically theological meaning; the pope speaks of the *colloquium salutis* (conversation concerning salvation) that God in his graciousness opens up with humankind. The use of the term in this way implies that within the informal meetings of people of faith something of God's own self-disclosure is revealed. In other words, there is rather more to dialogue than debating and discerning the worth of competing truth-claims. The relationship with the person who speaks and listens may itself be saying something about God.

In the 2001 document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus,* dialogue and the relationship with other religions emerges as a much more contested area of concern. The subtitle of *Dominus Iesus* is 'on the unicity and salvific universality of Christ and the Church'. The overall aim is to remind the Church that, however the relationship of Christianity and the world religions is to be configured, there is only a *single* mystery of God's salvific action in the world. What can be known of God through the doctrine of creation and what can be known through God's own act of self-revelation in Christ are not two distinct things; there is a continuity between them. The main themes treated are Christology and ecclesiology but the opening words indicate that the primary concern is mission—the responsibility the Church bears to witness to the Lord Jesus. Dialogue here is less the *colloquium salutis* that God initiates and is reflected in myriad ways in the lives and actions of people of faith than a 'method' of mission more appropriate to a pluralist age. It is, however, easy to miss the important Barthian insight, which now runs through all Catholic missiology, that the Church's mission is, strictly speaking, *God's* mission, the action of Logos and Spirit in the world, with which the Church seeks to cooperate.

This is what makes the Church missionary by its very nature, formed by the very desire to communicate the truth of God's universal love revealed in the Paschal Mystery. Thus the first Christian missionaries found themselves travelling across literal and metaphorical boundaries, into strange worlds and diverse cultures. Practical questions, such as Paul experienced at Athens, about how to translate Hebrew concepts into Greek, quickly became theological. What was only hinted at in Acts turned into a wholesale movement of

translation in the early patristic period when the Church found itself confronted by a diffuse collection of mystery cults, religious philosophies, traditional myths, and state-sanctioned rites. Such adaptation raised its own questions, and alongside the dominating theme of the Logos, the overarching principle of intelligibility that enables communication to take place, arose more severely apologetic questions about the status before God of those who have not acknowledged Christ. These questions are now more pressing—even if the emphasis and organizing principles have changed significantly. (p. 936) The theological as much as the practical import of dialogue has led to the retrieval of a typically Catholic approach to mission, which in recent times has come to be known as 'inculturation'. As William Burrows has argued, it is not just the overt proclamation of the Word that fulfils the missionary mandate given to the Church but sacramental actions and the holiness of lives that seek out and make manifest the 'seeds of the Word' in other religions and cultures (Burrows 1996). Whatever else dialogue means—and a number of dimensions are becoming apparent in the life of the Church—it is clear that it involves an intra-ecclesial discernment, learning what is of God in a world of many faiths and cultures.

Catholic Theology and Religious Pluralism

At the end of his brilliant study of the ancient adage that 'outside the Church there is no salvation', Francis Sullivan asks about its contemporary status. He concludes that it is 'only one way, and a very imperfect way at that, in which Christians have expressed their belief that God has given to his church a necessary part to play in his plan to save the world' (Sullivan 1992: 204). It is, in other words, not a statement about the extent of salvation but about the nature of the Church. This shift from soteriology to ecclesiology dominates Catholic theology of religions—the refiguring or rereading of classical themes in the light of the challenge made by a religiously plural world. Jacques Dupuis's magisterial survey, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, marks a trajectory from the early Church fathers to the present day. Dupuis's main concern is for the credibility of the Church in a world of many faiths. How can the Church profess its faith in Christ while yet granting 'theological space' to other religious traditions? By using the term pluralism in the title of his book Dupuis seeks to bring a Catholic sacramental sensibility to bear on a new context for theological reflection. What he calls the 'Mystery of Christ' model for understanding the relationship between the Word of God and other religious traditions is basically a development of Rahner's anthropology. Dupuis's own experience of teaching in India for many years gave the book a radical edge. But the use of the word 'pluralism' in the title was itself ambiguous, immediately associating him with the 'normative pluralism' thesis of the philosopher of religion John Hick. The 'Dupuis affair' which led to the book being reissued with a notification about possible 'ambiguities' grew out of the perception that Dupuis had got a little too close to Hick and that his attempt to construct an 'inclusivist pluralism' was a step too far.

However, another reading of Dupuis sees him offering an important Catholic critique of what has come to be known as the ‘threefold paradigm’. According to Hick and the ‘Myth of Christian Uniqueness’ school, three theological positions are run together as stages of historical development. A hard-edged evangelical ‘exclusivism’ (associated with the likes of Karl Barth) gives way to a more generous Catholic ‘inclusivism’ (usually (p. 937) associated with Rahner’s ‘Anonymous Christianity’ thesis). Both these theologies, however, are quickly seen to be inadequate and are superseded by Hick’s crossing of a ‘theological Rubicon’, an irrevocable step that makes Christianity one of many religions with God at the centre of a ‘Universe of Faiths’ (Hick 1989; Barnes 2009). Hick’s argument has a certain plausibility; theology is not a matter of repeating the timeless formulae but of communicating with new realities and new questions. For Dupuis, however, the account of Catholic theology as irredeemably patronizing shows scant understanding of the Paschal Mystery itself. The main issue is Christological—how the Mystery of Christ can be understood as giving a certain theological ‘space’ for the ‘distinct action of the *Logos asarkos*’ among people of other faiths. Dupuis’s aim is to show how *Logos* and *Pneuma*, the ‘two hands of God’, as Irenaeus puts it, can be said to work together within the Trinitarian economy of God’s act of self-communication (Dupuis 1997: 195, 321). The theological task is to distinguish without separating, so that, on the one hand, the creative impulse of the Spirit is left free, while, on the other, the Spirit remains the Spirit *of Christ*, the norm by which the ‘signs of the Spirit’ or the ‘seeds of the Word’ in the world of religions and cultures may be discerned.

The subtlety of Dupuis’s arguments make Hick’s ‘inclusivist’ label for Catholic theology of religions seem distinctly inadequate. While there is little doubt that Dupuis stands in the middle of the Catholic mainstream, he is also trying to show that it is perfectly possible, indeed necessary, to understand the uniqueness of Christ as at once—to use his terms—both ‘constitutive’ and ‘relational’. The Paschal Mystery has a ‘universal significance’ which yet allows for a ‘reciprocal relationship’ between ‘the path that is in Jesus Christ and the various paths to salvation proposed by the religious traditions to their members’ (Dupuis 1997: 305). How far such a reciprocity can be pressed is a moot point. Dupuis wants to grant a substantive role to the religions themselves in the providence of God’s action. In this he follows in the wake of Rahner who, in his later work, speaks not about the theory of the ‘Anonymous Christian’ but, more exactly, of the ‘presence’ of Jesus Christ in the history of salvation.

Rahner postulates two principles: firstly, the ‘universal and supernatural salvific will of God which is really operative in the world’ and, secondly, the historical and social nature of the ‘event’ of salvation. It is the Christian experience of grace mediated through a historical and social form that enables us to speak of the form God’s salvific action takes in the world (Rahner 1978: 313ff). The Incarnation reveals God through that which makes us most human—our rootedness in temporally bound forms. In other words, if for Christians God is made manifest in and through the world of our everyday experience, then something analogous is true for other people of faith. *For Christian and non-Christian alike*, divine grace is made present not apart from but precisely through concrete forms of human religious belief and practice. Paradoxically, by stressing the ecclesial form in

which grace is mediated, Rahner manages to build a bridge between different communities of faith. God does not deal with human beings independent of those historically bound socio-cultural institutions—'the religions'—which constitute and inform human existence in the world. This implies that the religions have a positive role to play in the unfolding of God's providential purposes and raises a new (p. 938) issue—the theological significance of otherness. For Dupuis theology can no longer be content with regarding 'other religions' as purely contingent phenomena. They may say something significant to Christians about what God is doing in today's world. A human being's commitment to a particular religious tradition has a part to play in that person's entering into a salvific relationship with transcendence.

Comparative Theology—Reading the World in Christ

The strictures of the 'threefold paradigm' have provoked a powerful reaction against the stereotyping of Catholic Christianity as basically 'inclusivist', a sort of mediating position between suspicious evangelicals and liberal pluralists of the Hick variety. Whatever the truth in the label—and it is important to remember that Catholic universalism at its best is characterized by an eschatological vision of the whole of creation gathered into the loving embrace of God—the paradigm approach is now seen as part of the history of the development of theology of religions, not as its explanation. The great merit of Dupuis's 'Mystery of Christ' approach is that he builds on Catholic principles and insights in order to break out of the shackles set by the various programmatic variations that are analysed extensively in *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism.* Thus in a later book he comes up with the unwieldy term 'asymmetrical complementarity' to speak of how Christianity and other religions can be said to co-exist (Dupuis 2001: 253ff). This remains a largely theoretical construct. What he does not do is develop Rahner's challenge to theologians and historians of religion to work a posteriori to show how God may be at work in the social and religious structures that sustain people of faith and through which they experience the gift of God's grace that is properly salvific. This challenge—to show that the religions are, in Dupuis's words, not just a *de facto* but a *de iure* reality—lies behind much of the contemporary theology of religions that emerges directly from the actual dialogue with other religions.

This takes us back to the theological account of dialogue noted earlier and to the Catholic tradition of inculturation through learned conversation with 'the other', which inspired the likes of the early Jesuit missionaries Matteo Ricci and Roberto de Nobili. Working very much away from centres of Christian power, they found acceptance with the local elite by adopting their manner of dress and social customs—*translating themselves* in order to translate the Gospel. Their ease of movement between religious worlds is exemplified today in a number of examples of practical dialogue focused on shared spiritual experience, or the struggle, or justice. Bede Griffiths and his two predecessors at the Śantivanam ashram in south India, Jules Monchanin and Swami Abhishiktananda (Henri le

Saux) managed to ground their theology in a routine of liturgical and contemplative prayer that engaged with the rhythms of Hindu devotion and mysticism. In Sri Lanka, Buddhist scholar and liberation theologian Aloysius Pieris, has produced (p. 939) extensive reflections on the complementary 'spiritual idioms' of Christianity and Buddhism, what he characterizes as a dialogue of 'agapeic gnosis' and 'gnostic agape' respectively (Pieris 1988: 110 ff). It is, however, Raimon Panikkar, with his intimate acquaintance of the religious worlds of Hindus and Buddhists, who illustrates most powerfully the promise and pitfalls of a theology that emerges directly from engagement with another religious world.

Panikkar's work ranges from dense philosophical reflection on the nature of dialogue itself to daring speculations on the doctrine of the Trinity as providing the essential pattern which in some way can be understood to underlie all spiritualities, or the spiritual practices with which human beings seek to come to terms with their experience of God, the world, and humanity itself (Panikkar 1973, 1981). This concern to bring Christian faith and the insights of other traditions into some sort of a creative correlation is what underlies his best-known and most systematic work, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*. In exploring the relationship of God and the world according to the opening verses of the *Brahmasutra,* Panikkar shows how religious symbols often have the power to open up meaning beyond the environment in which they were originally generated. It is not a question of the assimilation by Christian symbols of the Hindu, still less a substitution of one set for another, but of what Panikkar calls a 'mutual fecundation'. Panikkar is saying that Christ or the 'christic principle' always remains in an important sense a mystery—to *both* Christians and Hindus. Both are searching for the meaning of that Divine Mystery which Christians *name* in faith as Christ. Panikkar's thesis is based on the conviction that there is in all human beings that which does not alienate but allows them to reach a 'fullness of being'. It is not, therefore, a question about how Christians can go on defending 'their' name against the names given by others, but of how the name that Christians invoke can disclose to both parties *together* what it has to say about the unnameable.

This cooperative enterprise in learning about the ways of God takes place most obviously through formal and informal conversations where questions and answers form new relationships and open up new horizons of the theological imagination. However, it is not just people but texts, too, which can answer back and take the partners in unpredictable directions. The American Jesuit Francis Clooney is probably the best-known exponent of 'comparative theology'—a complex and sustained process of reading different religious texts together (Clooney 1993, 2001). His most ambitious and wide-ranging book, *Hindu God, Christian God,* has as its subtitle '*How reason helps break down the boundaries between religions*', reminding the reader that the aim of interreligious dialogue is not just to enable intelligent communication between persons of faith but to test and extend the limits of theological rationality itself. The point that comparative reading of texts emphasizes is that, underneath all the little insights and resonances any good dialogue may uncover, there grows a certain interreligious sensibility, a wisdom born from the willingness to cross borders. Panikkar, Pieris, Clooney, and other theologians who work in much the same way, are not interested in producing some normative template for all future dia-

logues, but to develop examples of good practice. The test is in the reading and in the theological meditation that reading provokes.

(p. 940) The accusation that such an enterprise is no more than a sophisticated form of postmodern *bracconage*, an unredeemed orientalism that plunders the world of the other, misses the point. This is an exercise of Christian imagination born of the desire to understand and be led by the traces of God's Spirit. Clooney speaks of 'reading the world in Christ', making the point that Christianity, like all religions, is formed by the reading of certain significant texts that teach not just the principles necessary for understanding doctrine but the skills of engagement that build relations with the other (Clooney 1990). In other words, to read the text of scripture is to learn how to read the text that is the world. Far from locking Christians into some untouchable system that excludes 'the other', it forces them to reflect on how such otherness is to be read with the only resources they have available—the commentarial tradition that bases itself on the biblical narrative. Reading in the company of a person of another faith, or prayerfully reading the texts of another religious tradition, is an exercise of discernment, extending what is all too often seen as a closed defensive process of self-examination into a conversation with a different yet analogous tradition that complements, extends, and challenges the limits of a religious vision. In these terms, theology of religions begins to emerge as an enterprise directed towards similar existential issues—faith and reason, loss and tragedy, justice and mercy, forgiveness and hope—and grapples with the same sort of questions, even if the sources of reflection—whether embodied in ritual and myth, or in prayer, custom, and spirituality—are quite different.

Dialogue and Discipleship

Finally, to return to my opening remarks, the question that occupies the theology of religions is how Christian language about the relationship between God, the world, and humanity—language which takes its rise from the Word which God utters—is related to other possible words which are to be discerned in the beliefs and practices of other religions and cultures. This is more than a purely pragmatic or tactical question about how Christian faith is somehow to be aligned with or accommodated to 'other faiths' (the agenda of the theocentrism of Hick's normative pluralism). To speak of 'seeds of the Word' is not to presume on some 'essence' of Islam or Vedantic Hinduism that is complementary to Christianity, but to point towards the action of God's Spirit who makes dialogue possible by forming people *in* faith. This follows from a model of dialogue as itself *theological.* What holds the many practical forms of interreligious dialogue together—by which is meant all manner of theological, cultural, social, and political interaction with persons of different faiths—is the possibility of learning something of the ways of God with human beings.

Strictly, of course, this is the work of the Spirit that leads the Church into the mystery of God. This is not to say that the Spirit somehow allows the Word to speak by, as it (p. 941) were, imparting 'information' about Jesus. Rather, the Spirit is a God-given force that dis-

rupts all attempts to force the Christian life, let alone understanding of God's ways, into neat and straightforward language. The Spirit is always unseen and therefore beyond imagining, but as the 'Spirit of Christ' the Spirit always points back to Christ, reminding the Church of the form and character that Christian living and discipleship take—the following of Jesus of Nazareth. Only through the life of discipleship, being led by the Spirit to become persons-on-mission, do Christians know the God revealed in Jesus Christ. What this life builds is a sensitivity and a critical generosity that is prepared to learn how the mystery of God's self-revealing love—Father and Son united in the Spirit of love—is often to be discerned in the 'seeds of the Word', which are to be understood not as static essences 'out there' but in terms of the dynamic movement of dialogue itself.

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Key Terms and Themes Index

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